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THE GREAT RUMOR.

PETER PRIGGINS,

THE

COLLEGE SCOUT.

P. S.
EDITED BY

Theodore Hook

THEODORE HOOK, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY PHIZ.

VOL. II.

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PETER PRIGGINS.

CHAPTER VIII.

SAM SMYTH'S MS. — *continued.*

"P., my dear!" exclaimed my affectionate wife, in rather overloud tones, at the foot of the staircase, "*dippishy voo*, the Dean has sent for you."

"I'll go to him as soon as I am dressed," I replied.

"Then *fate voter toylet* as quick as you can, for he is in a great hurry, and his temper ain't none of the best when he's thwarted."

To this base insinuation I made no reply, but hurried on my clothes; and rejecting Mr. Chops's offer to take off my beard "in less than no time," went into college, and found the Dean

VOL. II.

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walking up and down the cloisters with his finger to his nose—a habit in which he invariably indulges when thinking profoundly.

He started as from a dream when I asked him what he wanted me for, and without replying went up to his rooms. I followed him; and when he had closed the door, stirred the fire, and seated himself in his well-stuffed chair with his legs on the comforter, addressed me thus :

“ Peter, I’ve been thinking deeply, but unsuccessfully.”

“ Very unusual with you, sir,” I replied.

“ I know it, Peter—I know it; your powers of recollection will enable you to remember that I invited our Bursar and senior tutor to dine with me in my rooms.”

“ Yes, sir, to give Coquus an opportunity of retrieving his character.”

“ You have an excellent memory, Peter, for it’s a week ago; an interval of time during which I have been occupied in thinking painfully and profoundly on — what I should order for dinner. Heigho ! It is a very important matter—very. What can I do ?”

“ Leave it to Coquus, sir.”

“ No, Peter, no ; his ideas are too commonplace ; his imagination does not reach beyond cod’s head and shoulders—a joint and pudding. What can I do ? really one’s life in college is nothing but worry and care. Would that our beneficent founder had considerably appointed a Mrs. Dean to share in the weighty duties of my important office.”

“ It would have been a comfortable arrangement in some respects, sir, no doubt ; but perhaps it is better as it is.”

“ Perhaps it is, Peter—you speak from experience. Go and consult with Mrs. Priggins, and let me know her opinions *instantly*.”

“ Mrs. P., my dear,” said I, to my wife, who was industriously engaged in knuckling a mass of paste, to form what she calls a *patty de vo*, which she considers is the French for a calf-tart, “ the Dean wishes you to give him a bill of fare for a nice little dinner ; even in so trifling a matter he adheres to the *dux fœmina facti*.”

“ Why, as to *ducks*, P., tame uns is out, and wild uns ain’t come in ; but I’ll make him a

cart, I worn't edicated by a *shay-de-queezeen* for nothing."

After denuding her arms of the flour in which they were hidden, she took a pen and a scrap of paper, and with those strange contortions of face peculiar to persons who are unaccustomed to public writing, made out her *cart*, which I conveyed as rapidly as possible to the expecting Dean.

He wiped his spectacles, deposited them carefully on his nose, and unfolded the important manuscript ; but after turning it first one way, and then another, holding it close to his nose, and then at the distance of his extended arm, threw it on the table in a rage, exclaiming —

" Peter, mother Priggins is an ass ! "

I could not contradict him, but ventured to ask respectfully, if I could remove any little difficulties arising from illegibility or inaccuracy.

" *Little* difficulties, sir ! Why there are hieroglyphics in that document that would puzzle the professor of Arabic, and drive my friend of the Anglo-Saxon chair mad. "

“ Allow me to expound, sir ; I know her hand well.”

“ No doubt ; and have felt the weight of it too.”

Of this indecent allusion to our private arrangements, I took not the slightest notice, but picked up the *cart* and read the contents, which were these—

Purtarge

O ree ally paoray. or els, o shoe.

horedoover.

wheat narteeve and jambon de Yorkshire

Poison.

filly de sole and moroo ally mater dotell

Peayce de raysistance

*filly de boo sotay o troof or blanket de vo o sham-
pinion*

ontermay.

pom de tare al o desell. and shickoray ally crame.

ontray.

queeze de pully and paredri o naturell

Patty sery.

*vollyvong de sarevell de vo. and toort dongweel
vegitarbles, pang and frumarge ar discrayshun.*

“ Well, sir,” inquired the Dean, when I had with difficulty made out my wife’s characters, “ what do you understand by all that nonsense? Really the miseries of a college life are almost unbearable !”

“ Leave the dinner to me, sir, and I’ll do my best to satisfy you.”

“ I will, Peter—I will ; you have relieved me of an immensity of anxiety. The stomach sympathizes with the mind—bring me a basin of gravy-soup, and a pint of sherry, immediately.”

I will not say what dishes resulted from my consultation with Coquus ; they proved so satisfactory to all the party that the Dean’s eyes twinkled with delight, the Bursar’s sparkled, and the senior tutor expressed his admiration by winking at both of them, and uttering an emphatic “ hum.” Instead of being sconced and turned out of his situation, the cook was rewarded by an order for a gallon of beer in the buttery.

“ Now,” said the Bursar, “ if your port proves as good as the dinner, we will pour out

a plentiful libation to the *manes* of poor Sam Smyth."

The Dean looked a little indignant at the *if*, but, slowly imbibing his first glass, nodded approvingly, and pronounced it decidedly to be "Syms's best."

The Bursar and tutor positively declined giving their opinions upon the *first* glass; but, after the third, expressed their "satisfaction in being able to accord with the sentiment expressed by their hospitable friend at the head of the table."

I can safely say that they were right in their judgment, from the two glasses I contrived to prig out of each bottle—merely as a sample.

The Bursar had come provided with the remainder of the MS., and proceeded with the story—thus:

"My sudden removal from Acorn House was equally as agreeable to old Fidel as to myself. He fondly hoped that the taste I had had of the sweets of ushership would reconcile me to living on his bounty until I could get a curacy as a title for orders. In this he was mistaken. I

appreciated his kindness too highly to trespass upon it ; I therefore called on my friend, and former master, Dr. Bright, and begged his advice and assistance in procuring some employment which would provide me with food and raiment until the period of my ordination arrived.

“ I found him sitting in his little study, which opened by a glass-door into his garden. A heap of uncorrected exercises lay at his elbow, and a pile of impositions—that is, tasks done out of school-hours as a punishment—were being consigned to the flames.

“ ‘ Good morning, Dr. Bright. You are, I see, at your usual work.’

“ ‘ Ah ! Mr. Smyth, I am pleased to see you. I am indeed employed as usual ; my life resembles that of the horse in the mill, the same dull round of grinding, grinding, grinding, day after day, and my mill produces but little grist. I must not, however, complain ; for when I look around at my former college friends and brother clergymen, I see so many of them, men of superior attainments and greater moral worth

than myself, wearing away their lives in penury and want, on small livings or smaller curacies, that I must consider myself fortunate. How are you employing yourself now ?

“ ‘ I am reading for orders, sir ; and, as you know the misfortunes of my family, I need not tell you that I am, at present, depending on Mr. Fidel for support. I have ventured to call on you to solicit your interest in obtaining me some situation as private tutor in a family, or even teacher in a school.’

“ ‘ As to the latter, my dear sir, you had better break stones on the road at a shilling a day, or, like the Israelites in Egypt, make your tale of bricks without straw, than pass a life of misery in such a situation. I always have, and always shall endeavour to treat my assistants as gentlemen and friends ; but boys will be boys, and ushers will always be looked upon as a pack of cards — manufactured only to be made a game of.’

“ I told him that I had had a fortnight’s experience in ushership, and would rather not undertake the office again, if any other means of

getting my living could be obtained ; and briefly detailed to him my adventures at Acorn House, omitting the scene in the library.

“ ‘ Ah, sir, if the world could only see into the trickery practised by such illiterate and imposing characters as Dr. Doonuffin, the cause of education would be much advanced ; but I will not say more on the subject, as my remarks might be considered selfish and interested. I am happy to say I have it in my power to recommend you as private tutor in the house of a clergyman, who has three little boys whom he wishes to have prepared for Eton. I do not know him personally, but, from all I have heard of him, he is a kind-hearted, though very eccentric person. I will give you a letter of introduction and recommendation to him, and would advise you to ride over and deliver it in person.’ ”

“ He sat down, and wrote what my modesty induced me to consider a very complimentary testimonial, and directed it to the ‘ Rev. Naaman Nightshade, Rectory, Neitherside.’ He then wished me success, and begged of me to

apprize him if the situation did not suit me, and he would endeavour to procure me another.

“ Old Fidel, to whom I showed my letter of introduction, was much pleased at the very favourable opinion given by Dr. Bright of my abilities and qualifications ; but he could not draw any wide distinction between an usher in a school and a tutor in a private family. He had the same ideas of rude boys, dogs-eared books, large canes, applepie-beds, and short commons, as being common to all classes of subordinate teachers. Had I been appointed head-master of Oldeton grammar-school, the case would have been altered, as he fancied an immensity of dignity belonged to any gentleman who was fortunately able to obtain such an enviable situation.

“ He knew something of the Rev. Naaman Nightshade, because he had banked with us for seven years, and the little he knew had not tended to raise him in his estimation. Fidel, like most persons in his situation, was very accurate in his accounts, and was wretched if he could not make his incomings and outgoings

correspond to a farthing every Midsummer and Christmas-day. Now Mr. Nightshade, it appeared, was so careless in money matters in a large way, that his account was frequently overdrawn, and all warnings on the subject were unattended to until they stopped the supplies. When this was the case, he would call, and without examining his account, which was another serious offence in Fidel's eyes, apologize very humbly, and pay in a large sum, offering to pay interest for the amount to which he had overdrawn.

“ I confess that I thought if this was all that could be alleged against him, it was nothing very serious.

“ Neitherside was but seven miles from our borough ; but I had never even seen the rector, as he seldom went into society, being a very learned man, especially in the oriental languages, to the acquirement of which he had dedicated almost all his time.

“ I hired a pony and rode over to the rectory. The house, which was too large for the living, was, as far as I could judge by the exterior, in

a shocking state from want of repairs, and the tithe-barn, which stood within twenty yards of it, was nearly falling down. The garden which separated them was a perfect wilderness of cabbages, flowers, weeds, and shrubs, mingled together in the oddest confusion.

“ I hung my pony’s bridle to the gate, and was going, as I thought, to walk up to the door and knock ; but the gate was locked, and I could find neither bell nor any other medium of communication with the inhabitants. I began shouting as loudly as I could, and my efforts were so far successful, that I awoke a large slumbering Newfoundland dog, who aided them by an accompaniment *contra-basso*.

“ The effect produced by this duet was not exactly such as I expected, for instead of a ‘ liveried menial ’ appearing to ‘ open wide the castle’s gate,’ a little woman popped her head up from amidst a bed of brocoli, and stared at me as if she had never seen a gentleman before.

“ ‘ Hilloh ! my good woman,’ I cried, beckoning to her to approach, ‘ is your master at home ?’

“ Without replying to my very plain question,

she cried out in a sort of scream, 'Gracious goodness! oh!' took up her basket in which were several decapitated heads of brocoli, and, with the beheading instrument in her right hand, ran into the house as I supposed.

"I waited five minutes, thinking that she was, what servants call, making herself 'fit to be seen' before she came to let me in. I then began shouting again. Again my friend in the rough great-coat aided my endeavours, but no one appeared.

"I walked round to the back of the house, thinking that there might be a side-gate, through which admittance might be gained. I could find no other entrance, however, than the gate at which my pony stood, cropping the weeds within his reach. As the dog was chained up I resolved to scale the palings, which I effected with some little damage from the splinters and tenterhooks to my sit-down-upons. I walked up in a quiet lounging way to the door, hoping that some one might see me from the windows and apprise the rector of my arrival; but, to my great surprise, I found them carefully boarded

up. The door was knockerless, so I applied the toe of my boot with great vigour to the panels. The door, appearing to have too strong an attachment to the lintel and posts to dream of a separation, and no one appearing to answer my summons, though subpœnaed very audibly, I took the path round the house, by which the vegetable-cutter had just before vanished, taking care to keep at a respectful distance from the bow-wow, who was preparing to commence his hostilities, by raising his mane and showing his grinders, as dogs are apt to do when their suspicions are once raised.

“I found myself in a sort of courtyard, between the stones of which the rank grass and moss were protruding; in its centre stood what had once been a handsomely-carved stone-pump, with a sundial on its top. The nose, or gnomon, was twisted all awry, and the hours were ‘thrown into a horrible state of confusion,’ by the dial’s reclining uneasily at an angle of 45°. It was surrounded on one side by the house, and on the other three by buildings which had once been devoted to horses, coaches, and harness —

laundries, breweries, and other useful offices; but which now seemed to have retired from business, and to be totally without employment, except as a harbour for rats and other vermin.

“ I kicked as vigorously at the back door as I had done at the front, and with the same result. I began to fancy that I must have mistaken the house; but the directions I had received, and the contiguity of the church, made me feel that this must be the rectory. I confess I felt a little angry at being treated in so strange a manner, and was determined to gain an entrance if I was ‘had up’ for housebreaking. I accordingly raised myself by means of a hook, which, formerly, in the palmier days of the house, had served to hang horses’ bridles upon, and managed to gain the sill of one of the windows. This was evidently the window of the kitchen, for before a small fire there was a chicken pirouetting, with other indications of dinner. I tried to raise the window, but it was fastened, and I did not choose to risk the loss of two or three fingers by smashing the glass with my fist. I jumped down, and, by the aid of an old water-





Samuel Nightshade seriously alarmed

butt, climbed up to a window on the other side of the door, which, like the kitchen-window, was half closed by the bottom shutters being pulled up.

“The moment my head appeared above the shutter, bang went a pistol or gun, the ball of which passed through and shattered the pane of glass within a foot of me. I need not tell you that I descended much quicker than I ascended, and ran into what had been the stable, for fear of a second shot.

“I waited for some minutes, peeping through the window without seeing any one; but, at length, a powdered bald head shewed itself at the broken pane, and then a face in which terror and alarm were strongly depicted. By its side, after a few seconds, appeared the countenance of the servant whom I had seen in the garden. After peering about for some time, they seemed to talk earnestly together, and I resolved to shew myself, not doubting that my respectable outer-man would allay their very extraordinary state of alarm; but the moment I appeared, they disappeared, and the woman uttered her

‘My goodness gracious ! oh !’ in a most piercing shriek.

“I was puzzled what to do under these very extraordinary circumstances. If I presented myself at the window, I felt assured I should be used as a target for a second shot. If I went to the door and kicked again, I might have been fired at through the panel. At last I hit upon a plan, which fortunately succeeded. I split the end of my ashen riding-stick with a knife, and inserted my letter into the slit, as I had seen the crier of the court do at our assizes when he had occasion to hand up a message or note to the clerk of arraigns, or any of the barristers. I held the letter up to the broken pane, and was much pleased to find it snatched off my stick with a violent jerk.

“After waiting a few minutes, which I imagined were occupied in the perusal of my despatch, the door was opened with some difficulty, as it was protected by more locks, bolts, and bars, than are used for a prison-gate, and the rector rushed out and began to shake my hand and apologize to me for the rude reception

I had met with through an unfortunate mistake.

“He ushered me into the room from which the shot had come, and, to my great surprise, introduced me to the cabbage-cutter as Mrs. Nightshade. Her dress and appearance were certainly inferior to her station; nor did her manners indicate the position she held in the family; for to the ‘Mr. Smyth, my dear,’ of her husband, she replied, with the species of courtesy called a ‘short bob,’ ‘Hopes I sees ’e well, sir.’

“Before I proceed with the account of our interview and its results, it will be better to give Mr. Naaman Nightshade’s history as briefly as possible.

“In one of the numerous courts in the neighbourhood of Carey Street, Lincoln’s Inn, lived Mr. Nightshade, senior, the father of the Rector of Neitherside. He was a painstaking, busy little man, who earned a livelihood by keeping a bookstall, which was much resorted to by bibliomaniacs, who delighted in worming out odd volumes of books, valuable only for their antiquity, uselessness, and scarcity.

“In that dingy, dirty, well-filled store, at the age of fourteen, Naaman was placed by his father to keep shop whilst he went out to look for, and purchase at, ‘old libraries for sale.’ He had had a decent education at the Wesleyan school, of which sect his parents were rigid and conscientious followers.

“Whether his being named after Naaman the Syrian induced him to study the Syriac language, or the finding of an old grammar of that tongue amidst his father’s stores, I cannot say. He applied so zealously, however, to his new pursuit, that he entirely neglected the business of the shop, or rather window, for most of Nightshade’s bargains were completed out of doors. His mother, fortunately, had no other child, and found time to attend to the business and shield him from the anger of his father, who cared nothing for the contents of his books beyond what they would fetch in the market.

“Naaman had managed to make himself tolerably well acquainted with his favourite language, and had commenced the study of Hebrew, before his father discovered the manner in which he pas-

sed his time. He was surprised when he returned home, and relieved him from attending to the store, that his son, instead of slipping out and playing with the little dirty boys in the court, went up to his room and only left it to eat his meals in haste, and then, too, not unless he was summoned; still, as the boy was quiet, and, as he thought, attentive to the business in his absence, he did not trouble himself about the matter.

“It happened one day that his mother, who went daily to Clare-market, to purchase provisions, met with an accident by slipping upon a piece of turnip-paring, and was obliged to keep her bed for a few days. Naaman tried all he could to leave his books and watch the customers who peered over the stall as they passed; but, on the second day, thinking he could read and watch too, he brought down his pentateuch, and was soon so deeply engaged in it that all else was forgotten.

“Among the constant purchasers at the stall was the vicar of the parish—a little, queer, irritable old gentleman, who spent most of his time

and all his money in collecting old and rare editions of the Classics. It chanced that an Elzevir Horace lay in Mr. Nightshade's window, upon which Dr. Cobweb had cast a longing eye, and determined to cheapen, if possible — but to buy, at any rate.

“He took up the book, and, pretending to examine it in a careless manner, as if it were of no value in his eyes, asked, in a sort of contemptuous tone, what was the lowest price of ‘that thing.’ To which he was surprised at receiving no reply. He repeated it, and seeing that the boy did not even raise his head, hastily and unjustly concluded that he meant to insult him.

“He entered the shop, Elzevir in hand, and, putting the question for the third time, in a very loud voice, without obtaining an answer, gave poor Naaman a smart blow on the head with the rare edition, and called him a dirty little black-guard.

“Naaman sprung from his stool, and gazed on the vicar with his eyes in which there was ‘no speculation ;’ then, quietly rubbing his head, sat down again and went on with his studies.

“Dr. Cobweb could not stand this, but did what he rarely did with a book he purchased — made use of it, and raised sundry bumps upon the head of his insulter.

“Naaman stared, and repeated the rubbing process, and, as he had been busily tracing the course of the river Hiddekel, answered his tormentor’s question, ‘What’s the lowest price, you little ragamuffin?’ by assuring him, ‘That it flowed through Assyria and Ethiopia, and emptied itself into the Persian Gulf, by the two branches called Pison and Gihon.’

“The doctor, who, as a divine, was supposed to know all this, rewarded him for the ill-timed information, by giving him as sound a thrashing as so small a theologian could inflict.

“Nightshade *père* arrived home at this moment, and was surprised to find his old and excellent customer maltreating his boy; but, on listening to the cause, was so enraged, that he seconded the motion, and thrashed him himself with the bag of books which he had been busied in collecting that morning.

“The only apology poor Naaman could offer

was, 'I was only a-reading of Hebrew;' but it drew the vicar's attention, and, upon questioning the boy, he was surprised to find that he had made some little progress in the language.

"Naaman told him that he liked the Syrian better, which led to further explanations, the result of which was, that the doctor gave him a guinea to atone for his unjust blows, and, after a time, prevailed on his father, who hesitated only from religious scruples, to send him as a private pupil to his curate, to prepare him for college.

"Naaman made such excellent use of his time, that at the age of seventeen he stood for and gained a scholarship at St. Mark's College, in our University, and, after a successful career through the schools, was elected to the chair of Arabic professor.

"After committing several enormities, arising from his habitual absence of mind, he was presented, by the prime minister of the day, to the government-living of Neitherside, as a reward of his great learning and piety.

"Of his eccentricities at college, I shall only give a specimen.

“When it came to his turn to preach his first sermon, as professor, before the University, he prepared a discourse, and took for his text the well-known words, ‘Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language ; for they understand it.’ And, in order to prove that *he* did so, he wrote so long and zealously, that when the day arrived and St. Mary’s was crammed, he continued preaching for three hours, and was amazed to find, when he lifted his eyes from his book, for the first time, that all his audience had deserted him, but the vice-chancellor, the proctors, and the beadles, who were all looking very sleepy and tired. He stared, closed his MS., and, without uttering the usual conclusion, rushed from the pulpit, and, unattended by the poker-bearer, ran all the way to his rooms without his cap.

“He married an agreeable, amiable lady, with whom he passed two years of uninterrupted happiness. She, however, fell a victim to consumption, after giving birth to a girl; and, as a residence in Oxford grew distasteful to him, he resigned his professorship, and retired to his

living, taking with him the child and its nursemaid.

“In the country, his old habits, resulting from absence of mind, against which his wife had cautiously guarded him, returned with greater force, and many were the absurdities he committed, to the amusement as well as annoyance of his parishioners.

“It not unfrequently happened, that, just as he was leaving his house for church on the Sunday morning, his servant Tabitha, or Tab, as he familiarly called her, was obliged to remind him that a pair of drawers and a dressing-gown were not exactly the proper costume for the reading-desk and pulpit, and the congregation were kept waiting until Tab pronounced him all right.

“One day the sermon which he had prepared for an especial occasion could no where be found. The house was searched from top to bottom, but without success, and he was obliged to substitute another discourse, which had no reference whatever to the service for which his flock were assembled. In the course of the following week

Tab found the missing manuscript in the soup-tureen, where her master had deposited it that he might be *sure* to know where to find it.

“Unfortunately for his parishioners, he fancied himself very clever in physic, and undertook to relieve the parish doctor of a great deal of trouble and expense, by offering to give attendance, advice, and medicines gratis. How many he might have killed had he been allowed to persevere in his practice I cannot guess, but one unfortunate mistake that he made induced the village Esculapius to decline his further services.

“A poor old woman, who was suffering severely from indigestion—the consequences of eating some tough bull-beef—sent to him, and begged his assistance to relieve her. He felt her pulse, examined her tongue, and went through the usual routine of medical humbug with professional nicety, and, on uttering his usual ‘Hah! I’ve an idea,’ asked her if she had ever taken castor-oil.

“‘Ees, sir, often and often,’ replied his patient.

“ ‘ Then I’ll send you some—mix it in a basin of gruel, hold your nose tight while you drink it, and the nauseousness will not offend you.’ ”

“ ‘ Ees, sir, I wool.’ ”

“ Naaman sent her a pint bottle of the nastiness, and the old lady turned the whole of its contents into the gruel, and then with great difficulty, and after holding her nose for three-quarters of an hour, into her stomach. The consequence was — she was nearly killed, and threatened to ‘ have up ’ her pastor and master for trying to ‘ pison ’ her. This, and the administering of tincture of opium, instead of tincture of rhubarb, to an infant who had the *panti-noodles*, which is supposed to be Anglo-Saxon for the belly-ache, induced him to give up practising the healing art.

“ Tab, who really loved the infant intrusted to her care, was kept in a constant state of alarm, lest he should operate on his own child whilst it was teething ; but, being, as single gentlemen’s maids are wont to be — pretty nearly master, she would not allow him to see the babe until her fever had subsided.

“‘Tab,’ said he to her one evening, ‘I’ve an idea.’

“‘Should n’t wonder — you has a good many of ’em, and very queer ones some of ’em is.’

“‘I’ve made up my mind to it — *decretum est*.’

“‘Don’t talk so to me, but put it in plain words.’

“‘I’ll get married again,’ said her master to the maid, who, not liking the idea of being subjected to petticoat-government again, after having had every thing her own way for some time, replied :—

“‘And what woman do you think would go for to marry such a queer, odd body as you?’

“‘Ah! very true — I — I never thought of that.’

“‘I knows of but one,’ said Tab, dropping her hand, *by chance*, on her master’s knee, and, looking into his eyes with her own pretty blue sparklers, ‘as ’ud put up with all yur queer ways, and make you comfitible for life.’

“‘Ah! you’ve an idea—and who is she?’

“‘Lawks!’ cried Tab, approaching closer,

and taking his hand, which she squeezed affectionately ; ‘ can’t you guess ?’

“ ‘ I have *not* an idea,’ said Naaman, returning the pressure, and looking excited.

“ ‘ Why who can be a more properer person than she as has brought up your blessed beautyus babe, ever sunce it left its blessed mother’s bussum ?’

“ ‘ I *have* an idea — it’s you yourself, Tab,’ exclaimed Naaman ; ‘ come to my arms !’

“ Tab, like an obedient domestic, did as she was bidden, and received an exuberant Chaldaic embrace with great gratitude.

“ The following Sunday the rector himself published the bans of marriage between ‘ Naaman Nightshade, widower, and Tabitha Crumpley, spinster, both of the parish of Neitherside ;’ and as no just cause or impediment could be found against the proposal, they were united, and Mrs. Nightshade in the course of three years gave birth to three very fine boys.

“ Though the marriage lowered Naaman in the eyes of his lady neighbours, who were looking out for him, for themselves, or their daughters,

he did not care. Tabitha made him an excellent wife and servant, looked after his little comforts, and prevented every little *contre-temps* that might have occurred from his eccentricities. She never disturbed him in his studies, and filled and lighted his pipe for him at his accustomed hours.

“These virtues, for in that light Naaman beheld them, made Tab, as he still fondly called her, appear an earthly angel in his eyes ; to her he intrusted every thing — except the education of his children, which she wisely refused to undertake.

“The girl, now nearly seventeen years of age — I speak of the time when I arrived at the rectory — was still at a boarding-school. The boys were with Dr. Bright at Oldeton, who, finding they showed more talent than is usually found in boys of their ages, had advised their father to send them to Eton, as better calculated to bring them into notice, than a quiet, unpretending freeschool.

“I must now account for the very warm and cool reception I met with on my arrival.

“Several robberies had been planned and executed in the neighbourhood of Neitherside by a daring gang, who were said to be under the command of a young man of good family, who had run through a great deal of money, got deeply in debt, and been turned out of doors by his father, who had been nearly ruined by his extravagance.

“The rector, who was not very courageous, had had his fears heightened to such a degree by his wife, whose favourite studies were the ‘Lives of Highwaymen,’ the ‘Newgate Calendar,’ and ‘Jonathan Wild,’ that he determined to barricade his house so effectually day and night, that Captain Flint-and-Steel—so the leader of the gang was called—with all his men, should find it no easy matter to invade it.

“It happened, unfortunately for me, that the captain’s dress was described in the ‘Hue and Cry,’ as consisting of a green cutaway coat, with metal buttons, a buff waistcoat, white duck trousers, and a white hat. He was also said to ride a thorough-bred pony.

“Now Mrs. Nightshade, when she arose from

the brocoli-bed, and saw me standing at the gate in the identical dress, (which I have described as being considered objectionable by Dr. Doonuffin on my arrival at Acorn House), and holding a bay pony by the bridle, fancied that I was Captain Flint-and-steel *in propriâ* come to break in and steal. She accordingly told her timid husband that ‘one of the most blood-thirsty, ill-looking, gentlemanly villains, as she ever clapped her blessed eyes on, was a standing outside, and threatening to eat her and her master up piecemeal.’

“The rector immediately barred the back-door, and reconnoitred me through the keyhole of the front-door, and, when he saw me scale the gate, in spite of his tenterhooks, was assured his wife’s suspicions were just. He got his pistols, meaning to frighten me if I attempted to get in at the window; but his nervousness was so great when he saw my head above the shutter, that the pistol went off, and alarmed him quite as much, and perhaps more, than it did me.

“My sudden descent from my dangerous

situation made him fancy he had shot me and become a murderer, and, when he saw me alive and well, peeping round the corner of the stable, he had no doubt that I was lying in ambush, waiting for an opportunity of returning his fire; an idea in which his wife confirmed him, by quoting many passages from her favourite authors, wherein were detailed sanguinary instances of deep and determined revenge.

“‘Tab, my dear,’ said the rector, after he had read my testimonials, ‘Mr. Smyth will dine with us.’

“‘Goodness gracious! oh!’ replied the lady. ‘I’m really quite ashamed to set him down to one fowl.’

“I begged she would not say any thing more in the way of apology; but Naaman, pulling up his stock with an habitual jerk, said,

“‘I’ve an idea—kill another.’

“But Mrs. Nightshade had disappeared before this villanous order could reach her ears.

“During the interval which Mrs. Nightshade employed in ‘knocking up a bit of dinner,’ an arrangement was made between the rector and

myself, in which it was settled that I should have the use of the gardener's cottage for myself and the boys, with James Jobs to wait upon us. We were to have our meals at the rectory, to prevent the necessity of a second *cuisine*, and, what he dreaded much, a second female about the premises.

"In addition to a very liberal salary, he offered me his valuable services in preparing me for ordination. Thus I was, as the masons say, 'comfortably tiled in,' and began to fancy that Fortune was tired of kicking me so viciously as she had done lately. Scarcely, however, had I taken possession of my humble cot, and assisted James in arranging my books on their shelves, when a letter was brought me, saying that my poor mother was dangerously ill.

"I hastened to my uncle's house, and found her dying — at least, so dangerously ill with dropsy on the chest, that the medical attendant gave no hopes of her recovery, and intimated that suffocation might carry her off without a minute's warning.

"I attended her incessantly for a fortnight,

never leaving her bedside for above five minutes at a time, a confinement for which I was rewarded by her gratitude, and an opportunity of examining my thoughts and feelings, which went far to reconcile me to entering the church.

“ After her burial I returned to Neitherside, and commenced operations with my pupils, whom I found extremely docile and gentlemanly, and so far advanced in their classics, that I confess I was obliged to ‘ read up ’ to keep a-head of them.

“ I trust they profited more by my cramming them, than I did by their father cramming me ; for, though his will was good, his long-indulged habits defeated his intentions. As soon as the boys were in bed, I used to go up to the rectory, taking with me my testament and bible, with passages marked which I wished expounded. Let the subject be what it would, geographical, historical, or theological, in a few minutes Naaman would exclaim, ‘ I’ve an idea,’ and go off at score into the profundities of oriental literature, sending me away at eleven o’clock just as wise as I came, but with a promise, which I need

not say was broken, to attend to my particular questions on the following evening.

“Six months passed—six happy months—for my mind and body were constantly engaged, and I had nought to trouble me. My mornings were passed with my pupils, my spare time in shooting and fishing, for which the neighbourhood afforded great facilities. In the evening I read again, and smoked my cigar with the rector, while he lectured on Chaldaic and Hebrew.

“Winter came, and with it a letter from the rector’s daughter, whose existence I believe he had forgotten, for he had not seen her for four years. It contained a request that she might be allowed to return to her home, as her education was now finished, and she was anxious to see her father and brothers.

“Tabitha, who foresaw an infringement of some of her rights and privileges, and visions of a lady’s-maid, an animal towards whom she entertained a decided aversion, was not very ready to grant her young step-daughter a favourable answer, and hinted that she thought another

year's 'Talian and moosuck' would be advisable; but Naaman 'had an idea' that his little girl — for such she was still in his mind's eye—was justly entitled to her share of the nice pies and puddings which Tabitha made for her brothers. He wrote, therefore, and fixed a day for her return from Kensington by the coach to Oldeton, where some one was to meet her, and accompany her to Neitherside in a 'yellow postshay.'

"I had for some time expressed a wish to go over, see old Fidel, and offer my thanks to Dr. Bright for having placed me in so pleasant a situation. The rector rather annoyed me by suggesting that I could walk over and return with his 'little girl' in the chaise. I say annoyed, because never having seen the original Mrs. Nightshade, the mother of Lucy, I could not divest myself of the notion, that she must have resembled the kind-hearted, but vulgar Tabitha, and that Lucy was a juvenile individual of the same species. I, however, consented to the arrangement, though I did not much like it. After dining with old Fidel, I went to the

inn to await the arrival of the coach, which was still driven by my old friend and companion, Tom Whipcord, and called the Sovereign-day.

“ He arrived punctually to his time — with the short reins ready unbuckled, which he threw down to Jem the ostler, and told him to order out ‘ a yellor’ directly. As soon as he had descended, he shook me by the hand and said,

“ ‘ Ah ! Mr. Samivel — how’s yer person ?’ and then winking in a very peculiar way to the coach-window, whispered, ‘ My eyes !—there’s sich a hangel hinside—took her up at Kensington, with sich a heap o’ luggage, and an arp, or a geetar, or a pi-any-forty, or summit o’ that natur ! I was hobligated for to ave a pair of leaders hover the ill’s.’

“ This was my bird, of course—so I opened the coach-door, and as there were two young women inside, both closely veiled, I inquired which was Miss Nightshade. A very sweet voice replied, ‘ I am, sir ; pray is my father’s servant here to meet me ?’

“ The bustling hostess, in assisting her to alight, informed her that ‘ the chaise was ordered,

and that that gentleman,' meaning me, 'the family tutorer, was to accompany her home;' a piece of information that seemed to surprise her, and cause her to examine my looks a little more closely than she had done by the light of the coach-lamps and the ostler's lantern.

"As soon as the luggage was strapped on to the chaise, and Jem pronounced it 'all right and tight,' the 'first turn' was ordered out, and I went into the parlour to announce the fact to Miss Lucy. Judge of my surprise, Bursar, when, on entering the comfortable and well-lit parlour, I found one of the most lovely girls I had ever seen. She was rather above the middle height, and a little inclined to the *embon-point*. Her face was nearly oval, her eyes very dark, though not black, and her complexion somewhat pale; but it might have appeared so either from fatigue, or from the profusion of dark auburn hair, which fell in ringlets beside it.

"She smiled—I thought rather maliciously, and inquired, if I thought it prudent in a young lady, who had just left boarding-school, to trust

herself for seven miles in a chaise with a young gentleman, though he was a 'tutorer' in her father's family?

"The clever way in which she mimicked the hostess's 'tutorer' amused me, and I smilingly assured her, that, as it was by her father's express desire that the enviable opportunity of escorting her home had been given me, there could be no impropriety in my doing so.

"She gave me a look of very peculiar meaning, that led me to fancy that my infernal green cutaway and buff waistcoat, which I resolved to discard from that hour, gave me rather too knowing an appearance for the protector of one so young and fair. She merely said, that she had no doubt her father 'had an idea'—and she imitated his manner admirably—that she was still a little child, or he would not have left her to the protection of such a *gay* young gentleman as myself.

"During our journey home, which seemed to me shorter by at least six miles than it really was, our discourse, for I cannot call it conversation, was upon the well-worn subject, the wea-

ther—until all on a sudden she threw herself back in the carriage and burst out into a fit of uncontrolled laughter, which made me feel very unhappy in my mind, for I began to think she was laughing at me. When she had nearly recovered, I ventured to ‘hope she was amused.’

“‘I am exceedingly,’ she replied. ‘I was laughing at the idea of my prim governess, who always spoke of young men as if they were devouring monsters, seeing you and me shut up together in a hack-chaise, on a deserted road, in a dark night. I think I see her horror at this moment;’ and again she indulged in a hearty laugh.

“The ice being thus broken, our conversation became animated, and I found her exceedingly well-informed on most of the subjects on which we touched, but with talents for satire and mimicry, which, if indulged in without restraint, would render her most cordially detested—by her own sex, at any rate.

“Had she seen any thing of the world, beyond the regions of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, she would have been probably more re-

served in her manner towards a perfect stranger like myself; but she was completely a child of nature, and love of fun and glee was the only passion that as yet reigned in her heart. Her flow of spirits roused me, and I amused her very much by an account of my reception on my first visit to the rectory. She proposed having a little fun with her ‘dear funny father,’ to which I of course consented. The plan was laid, and when the chaise drew up to the parsonage gate, and Naaman came out to greet his ‘little girl,’ she collected her clothes around her, and shortening her height by half kneeling, *à la* Matthews, confirmed him in the idea that she was still the little child he thought her, and turning round to me, he requested me to lift the little dear in, as the path was very sloppy. To this she was too cunning to assent, but tripped before us, still stooping in a way that threw me into convulsions. On entering the parlour, she drew herself up to her full height, and drawing back her veil, threw herself into her father’s arms. Naaman was too much surprised to return her affectionate embrace, and holding her

out at arms' length, with one hand, and putting on his spectacles with the other, after surveying her for five minutes, exclaimed, 'I've an idea—you're grown a woman! Mr. Smyth, I've an idea—it was very improper.'

"Lucy assured him I was a 'very steady young man, and had behaved with the greatest propriety;' which made me feel very oddly again—though I was afterwards convinced her words were not meant to convey any covert meaning.

"Tabitha, I thought, was not quite pleased at the grown-up beauty of her step-daughter, but behaved very civilly and attentively to her; the more so, perhaps, because she came unattended by a lady's-maid. Her kind inquiries about the journey, and the fatigue of travelling, were cut short by Naaman, who 'had an idea' that a little supper would be more agreeable to his child than all Tab's kind interrogatories. Supper was accordingly served, and I retired to my cottage to dream of Lucy Nightshade.

"For a week or two, I confess, I rather disliked what I saw of Lucy's character; I cer-

tainly feared her—she was so very satirical. She made a great many—to her, no doubt—amusing remarks on my substituting a sober suit of sables for my green cutaway and white etceteras; and by her method of reading her brother's English exercises, with which I had taken great pains, made them appear the greatest nonsense that could be conceived.

“ Her father, instead of checking her, encouraged her remarks, as he ‘had an idea’ that it showed her talents, and amused me. I began to feel really uncomfortable, and avoided the rectory under one excuse or another as much as I could; but this plan was soon frustrated, for she induced Naaman to come to the cottage two or three times a-day, to see that we were all comfortable, and to get flowers for her bouquets.

“ In a month's time she appeared completely changed, and treated me with a degree of reserve for which I could not account. Instead of avoiding her, I paid her every attention in my power; my gun and fishing-rod were thrown aside, and my leisure hours passed in walking with or reading to her. Need I say to what

this led? I fell in love, of course—how could I avoid it? I never owned my love, yet I felt that she knew the state of my feelings, and almost dared to think, returned them.

“ One evening, as I was sitting with her and her father, who was smoking his pipe, whilst I was reading aloud a play of Shakspeare, Naaman, sending forth a cloud which nearly smothered us, exclaimed, ‘ I’ve an idea !’ I lowered my book to listen to the ‘ idea,’ and Naaman, after looking first at Lucy, and then at me, said,

“ ‘ I see it all—you love one another.’

“ Poor Lucy blushed, of course, and saying, ‘ What a very odd man !’ rushed out of the room.

“ An explanation ensued, and I confessed that I was strongly attached to Lucy, but had not informed her of my attachment, as I felt that my circumstances were not in so flourishing a condition as to justify me in asking her hand.

“ ‘ I’ve an idea—you’re a very honourable young man. I’ve planned it all—I’ve an idea—that I make myself rather ridiculous in the pulpit. I’ll resign it to you.’

“ This was perfectly true, as, of late, his absence of mind had increased so much, that he made many mistakes during the service, and sometimes forgot so entirely what he was about, that the clerk was obliged to remind him that he was in church, and point out to him where to go on.

“ ‘ I’ve an idea !’ he continued ; ‘ the boys shall be sent to Eton—you shall be ordained on this curacy—the stipend, and Lucy’s fortune, which she inherits from her mother, will be enough for all your wants. Tab and I will resign the rectory to you, and retire to the cottage—you shall be married, and be very happy.’

“ I reminded him that it was necessary to have Lucy’s consent to this arrangement ; and he replied,

“ ‘ I’ve an idea !—I never thought of that—but I’ll go and sound her.’

“ He left me in a very unpleasant state of suspense, and returned in a few minutes, leading in Lucy, and exclaiming,

“ ‘ I’ve an idea !—she consents—take her—she’s your’s !’ And while I was enacting the

usuals upon such occasions with Lucy, he amused himself by making sundry pirouettes and figures, that would have done credit to an opera-dancer, and which would, probably, have been prolonged, had not Tabitha entered, and seizing him by his coat-tail, pinned him, or rather pinioned him, to his chair.

“As our road to matrimony was Macadamised, and free from ruts and obstructions, I will not dwell upon the events of our courtship, but will merely say, that every arrangement was completed; and conclude my adventures, by detailing the circumstance that blighted my fair prospects for ever, and left me the miserable nervous creature that I am.

“About a week before my ordination, and after I had passed the usual examination before the bishop’s chaplain, I proposed to my betrothed to visit some hills in the neighbourhood, which were much resorted to by picnic parties, on account of the picturesqueness of the scenery in the vicinity, and the extent of the views from their summits.

“It was a fine day in the month of May;

indeed the sky was cloudless, and the sun's rays more scorching than they generally are at that early season of the year. I walked by the side of Lucy, who was riding on a pony that I had purchased for her. The ascent of the hills I found exceedingly fatiguing, and was really wearied when I reached the top.

“ I had sent James on before us with a basket of refreshments, with which he was to await our arrival in a small circular stone building, which the lord of the manor had kindly erected for the use of the numerous parties that visited the hills.

“ After resting a while, and refreshing ourselves, we left the pony in charge of James, and proceeded to the different points whence the finest prospects could be obtained. So entirely were we occupied in gazing at the views, and expressing our sentiments upon the loveliness of nature around us, that we did not notice the extraordinary change that had taken place in the appearance of the sky, until reminded of it by James, who brought the pony, and begged of Lucy to mount and ride back to the round-

house as quickly as possible, as he dreaded the approach of a storm. She mounted, and we ran by her side ; but before we could reach our place of shelter, a few large drops of rain, and the rumbling of distant thunder, proved that my servant's prognostics were right.

“ The heavens seemed to be covered with a dark gray curtain, except in two spots, which appeared nearly black, and from each of these, which seemed hurrying on to meet as enemies in dread encounter—frequent flashes of forked lightning gleamed. As soon as I had placed Lucy within the building, I could not resist the desire I felt to view the extraordinary look of these two hostile clouds. I placed myself, in spite of the warnings of James and Lucy, under the projecting eaves of the roof, which was formed of some metallic substance. On, on came the dark masses, looking darker as they neared each other. At last they met, and one of the most awful flashes of lightning I had ever witnessed ensued, followed by a clap of thunder, such as one seldom hears in this climate. A second and a third followed in rapid succession,

and, ere I could reach the door of the building, a fourth flash felled me to the ground, where I lay stunned, and recovered only to see James standing over the lifeless bodies of Lucy and the horse. The house was roofless—the lightning had melted the metal, and rent the walls asunder.

“What ensued for some weeks I know not. James must explain all to you. When I was restored—partially at least—to health, I resolved to leave my kind friend, the rector, and the scene of my frustrated happiness. He was much hurt at my leaving him in his bereavement, but I *could* not stay—I should have gone mad if I had done so. Fortunately I saw an advertisement in the paper of a title to be obtained at Trevenny, in Cornwall, which I resolved to accept. I went down with James, and, after an interview with Messrs. Nibson and Inkspot, accepted their terms—niggardly as they were—and settled down as curate in a part of the island, where nothing could remind me of my lost happiness.

“And now, Bursar, farewell! should this

ever meet your eye, preserve a friendly remembrance of your old friend, Sam Smyth."

"I am rather glad that is over," said the Dean, yawning outrageously; "we college fellows ought not to have our sympathies over-excited. Peter, we will try your mixture, which the under-graduates call by an indecent name—make us a jug of egg-flip."

"Excuse me," said the Bursar, "but as term is not over for the next month, I shall not venture upon *that*. Peter, bring *me* a glass of cold without, as usual."

However, eventually I made egg-flip for *four*, for which Mrs. P. commended me highly.

CHAPTER IX.

“ ULLO ! Mr. Rakestraw,” said my youngest boy, about two o’clock one morning, to the corpulent and civil landlord of the Shirt and Shot-bag, “ his father ere ? ” for he has the Oxford trick of exasperating his vowels and depriving his aspirates of their natural rights.

“ Yes, Master Nic, he be.”

“ Where be’e, then ? ” inquired Nicomedes, which name the parson gave him by mistake for Nicodemus.

“ Up stairs in the lodge-room—the Apollo—No. 2, first door to the left,” replied the landlord ; “ but you must not go in—you arn’t an Odd Fellow.”

“ A Hodd Feller,” cried Nic, scratching his head and looking bewildered, “ what’s that ? hallays thought father ha rummy hold cove, but hi never know’d has ’e was a hodd feller.”

Mr. Rakestraw scratched *his* head and looked quite as bewildered as little Nic, for, though he had kept a lodge for some years, he had never been called upon to explain the nature of odd-fellowship before. The *scalptus digitorum* elicited this very satisfactory elucidation.

“Why you see, Nic, the Odd Fellows is a set of werry nice men, as comes here once a month and drinks and smokes, and spends their money like gen’lemen. They knows one another a thousand miles off, and if one on ’em gits in a scrape the tothers gits him out on ’t. And they has officers and sich like, and banners and collars and all manner, and never tells their wives nuffin as they does—that’s an odd fellow, Nic.”

“Well ! hi never !—no never !” replied Nic. “And so father’s one of them here sort, is ’e ? Blowed hif hi don’t go and tell mother.”

“Yes he is, you young tell-tale—he’s ‘Most Noble Grand’ this werry evening, and is on the throne this werry moment, lectering on the science, and if you go to split to your mother, he’ll split your head, and richly you desarves it, you young wusbird.”

“ Well, then,” said Nic, “ hi vunt—hif—”

“ If what?”

“ Why, hif you’ll stand a glass of peppermint and gin.”

The landlord, willing to ensure the secrecy so valuable to the interests of the craft, *gave* him a glass of his favourite cordial, and chalked it up to me.

“ Now,” said Nic, licking his lips and draining the very last drop from the glass, “ just you step hup to the hold boy and tell him as ow Mr. Downe and Mr. Tripes as tumbled hout hof the cart, hand his very nigh dead—hat least hunsensible, and as sent for im to come to ’em directly.”

“ Bless my soul !” cried Rakestraw, alarmed.

“ Why didn’t you say so afore?”

“ Why, ow could hi, hi should like to know, when you was a cramming me with hodd fellers and peppermint?”

The landlord lost this very proper reply, for he had run up stairs as fast as his rotundity would allow him, and entered the lodge pale with his unwonted exertions, and the seriousness of the news he had to convey.

“ Most—Noble—Priggins.”

“ A fine—a fine,” from the brethren.

“ Most—Noble—Grand ! beg pardon—but—boy—Nic—at the door—two—masters—killed from a — tandem — déad and sent — for you,” panted forth the landlord.

I sprung from my throne, divested myself of the insignia of my office, and was preparing to obey the dead men’s orders, when Dusterly, who is our secretary and foreign correspondent, held me back, saying—

“ Wait ha hinstant — I want to put ha himportant hinqury. Brother Rakestraw, ow’s the osses ? hare *they* urt ?”

“ Don’t know—I’m—sure.”

“ Then what a hass you hare,” replied brother Dusterly.

I burst from him and ran down to college as fast as I could, and found my boy Jem making two stiff glasses of brandy-and-water for the dead men, who were scolding him for being so long about it, and sponging their faces, which were covered with blood and dirt, with a couple of clean fine-holland shirts, which they had taken

from the drawers of Mr. Solomon Stingo, into whose rooms they had bolted in preference to their own, as they were covered with mud, and Solomon was particular about his furniture, and did not like *his* liquors to be consumed.

I turned Jem out of the room, finished compounding the grog, and inquired the cause of their accident.

Just as I put the question, Mr. Wydeawake entered the room with Mr. Stingo, who looked three-parts drunk, and the other part disgusted at the coolness of his friends' drinking his hot brandy-and-water, and converting his undergarments — which cost twenty-four shillings each, as he informed them — into towels.

“ Well,” said he, “ this *is* cool, however !”

“ Is it, old fellow ?” replied Mr. Tripes, sipping his grog and blowing it. “ I’m convinced it’s hot—scalding hot ! Peter, put a little cold water to it and another dash of brandy ; I hate nibbling at a glass, I want a *swig*,” which is pure Carthusian for a draught.

“ Peter !” said Mr. Wydeawake, “ in the closet in Mr. Stingo’s bedroom you’ll find some

excellent whiskey ; bring a bottle of it and a lemon, and make a jug of toddy."

" I say though," interrupted Mr. Solomon, " you might just as well have been civil enough to ask *my* leave."

" Oh, bother about that, Stingy — I beg pardon—Stingo, I mean," replied Mr. Tripes, " out with the liquid, Peter, unkennel the bottle, and we'll begin the evening."

I obeyed of course, and, when the toddy was made, Mr. Solomon thought he might as well have his share of his own whiskey, but Mr. Tripes stood sentry over it with the hearth-broom, and swore he should not have a taste, unless he drank off one bottle of his worthy father's best brown stout to clear his palate first.

Solomon, it will be recollected, hated the very mention of malt-liquor in conjunction with the name of his respectable and justly-noted governor. He looked as if he would have killed his enemy if he dared ; but, knowing Mr. Tripes's determined character, he quietly absorbed his bottle of stout, and was then allowed to sit down

to the toddy, or, rather, the toddy-jug, for the trio had already emptied it.

“Peter,” said Mr. Richard Downe, “Peter, Mr. Solomon has no toddy.”

“Make him some directly, sir,” cried Tripes.

“I say though,” again interrupted Mr. Stingo, “you might as well —”

“Peter,” cried out Mr. Wydeawake, “you may as well make three bottles at once; here’s lots of hot water.”

“I say though —”

“And, Peter,” exclaimed Mr. Tripes, flourishing his hearth-broom significantly, “let us have a dash of curaçoa in it — you’ll find a bottle under the bed.”

“I say though—I won’t stand *that*,” said Mr. Stingo.

“You shan’t, my dear fellow,” replied Tripes, and down he knocked him by a well-directed blow of the hearth-brush.

“Now, Solomon,” cried Mr. Wydeawake, “shew yourself a man !”

He seemed inclined to do so, as he actually doubled his fist, but unclosed it again when he

saw Mr. Tripes, who was just in his glory, preparing to clear for action by taking off his coat, and contented himself by articulating fiercely

“You shall hear from me to-morrow morning.”

“All right, old fellow,” said his opponent, putting on his coat again. “Peter! cigars! they are stowed away in his hatbox upon the bedtop.”

Solomon made no remark, but looked unutterables, and helped himself to a large tumbler of toddy, which he would have enjoyed very much had not his hand been so unsteady from previous drinking, or from Mr. Tripes jogging his elbow, that he poured the contents outside instead of inside his neckcloth, and scalded himself unmercifully.

“Never mind, old fellow, better luck next time. I’ll hold your hand,” said Mr. Downe, filling his glass and administering the whole at one gulp as successfully as if he had been drenching a horse.

Solomon sat perfectly still for five minutes, watching them lighting *his* cigars. Then his

eyes began to look glazy, and the colour left his face. This paleness was succeeded by a hiccuppy sort of convulsion of his whole frame, and a short bobbing backwards and forwards of his upper person, and a frequent shuffling change of the position of his feet.

“Look out for squalls,” cried Mr. Tripes.

“Peter, put that beast to bed,” said Mr. Wydeawake.

“Take all the cold water away,” continued Mr. Downe, “and empty a bottle of his governor’s porter into his ewer.”

The former order I in mercy obeyed, but not the latter; and, though Mr. Solomon resisted, I succeeded in undressing him, and having put all things in the order requisite upon such occasions, locked him in and put the key in my pocket; as I knew that if access could be obtained to him, he would very soon be lugged out again, and drenched with water first, and cork-and-candle-greased afterwards.

While pretending to put things in order, which was merely an excuse to stay in the room, I listened to a garbled account of the adventures

of the evening, but on the following day I heard Mr. Wydeawake describe the whole affair at a wine-party, and, as well as I can recollect it, will tell it in his own words.

“ So Dick and Tripes were nearly being rusticated this morning,” observed some one.

“ As near as a toucher,” replied Tripes, “ and we’ve got an imposition that will bring Chops, the barber, five pounds very easy, and are confined to college, after nine, for the rest of the term.”

“ What was it for ?”

“ Only for tandemizing.”

“ Not exactly,” said Mr. Wydeawake, “ but I’ll tell you the whole story.

“ You must know that we made up our minds to go over and see the

ABINGDON THEATRICALS,

because old Chatty—now tobacconist and snuff-seller, but formerly a first-rater at old Drury, especially in French characters—had consented, at my especial request, to perform *M. Morbleu*, which he played in London for fifty successive nights.

“I promised Jackman, the manager, whom I knew from his having played in our part of the country, to make up a party and get him a good house. He is a very industrious man, and keeps a large family just above starvation point by his unremitting exertions. Old Chatty was looked up to by him as a star, so I invited him to meet him in my rooms, and after warming them with wine, left them for ten minutes to settle pecuniaries; and I believe it was arranged that they were to divide the profits between them, the ‘Lion,’ of course, having the best share, as Jackman had to pay the other performers as usual.

“I offered to drive Chatty over in a buggy, but he declined, under the pretence of having his dresses to take over—as he was to play *Sir Anthony Absolute* as well as *Morbleu*. His real reason for declining my offer—for there was plenty of room for his wardrobe under the buggy—was that he had vowed never to ride in a gig again, because one of his town friends had cap-sized him about six weeks before; and he fell so heavily on a conspicuous part of his person, that his ‘sederunts’ were any thing but agreeable for

a month afterwards. He went over on the Southampton with Beyzand, in the morning, having to attend a rehearsal, and to drill the rustic actors in the 'little business' of each scene.

"Dick Downe wanted me to join him in a team, but I declined; for though I have no doubt of his capabilities as a Jehu, yet accidents will happen; and I have a great respect for my personal appearance, and a horror of crutches; nor do I think a man looks the handsomer for having his nose dislocated, and his eye covered over with 'a green veranda.'

"Dick found a victim in Tripes, who cares for nothing, so that he can get his beer; and, as there is no public between Oxford and Abingdon, he thought the quicker the journey was done the better. Dick procured his old favourites — Woodpecker and old Peter; for Kickum can deny him nothing, they are on such *very* intimate terms. He *teas*, I believe, with Mrs. Kickum six nights out of seven, and plays at 'hunt the slipper' with the girls."

Dick energetically denied the fact, and threw

an orange at his slanderer's head, which missed him, and nearly knocked Mr. Stingo's right eye out.

"I believe," continued Mr. Wydeawake, "that they got safely to Abingdon, though Dick Whiting, the carrier, said he was forced to lead the leaders round the turnings, which are certainly very awkward."

"What an infernal liar!" in a parenthesis, from Mr. Downe.

"I was determined to go over in a fly with my liberal friend Solomon, who always volunteers pikes, and Tom Springer, the M.A., who, as usual, wanted to walk, or row down and bathe on the way, though the ice is an inch thick. He sulked for five minutes at my declining to be metamorphosed into an icicle to oblige him, but his good nature returned when I promised to take a forty-mile constitutional with him another day. Little Rooke made up a fourth, and away we went with old Scuffledust's mules at a very good pace. The rest of our party went some in buggies, some on horseback—and we met, as per agreement, at the Crown and

Thistle, which you will all acknowledge to be one of the very best inns in England.

“The worthy and excellent landlord rushed out of his little bar as the fly entered the gateway, and called out ‘attention,’ as usual, which brought out two waiters, a brace of chambermaids, four postboys, boots, George Blunt, the hostler, and a very fine boy, his son—remarkably like his father.

“‘Shew these gentlemen into No. 4,’ said our host; ‘and George, take that bull-dog,’ for Solomon had got little Snap with him, ‘and tie him up in the stable.’

“‘Here, Bill,’ replied George, ‘I shan’t have my fingers bitten, nor my stables dirtied.—You take and tie him up with the posters—the gen’lemen will give you sixpence, I dare say, and you wants it worser nor me.’

“Solomon wanted to save sixpence by tying her up himself, but George told him ‘he did not consider as he was behaving like a gen’leman,’ which settled the point.

“Our host, like other great men, has his little peculiarities—one of them is a peculiarly merry

laugh, which would break the heart of a melancholy tee-totaller, and a peculiar way of telling a good story, singing a comic song, and giving imitations of remarkable characters. Another is a very peculiar cut coat, which always fits too much or too little—his tailor evidently wishing to ‘give him a wrinkle’ or two with every fresh garment ; but his great peculiarity is, that he has not a bottle of bad wine in his cellar. *Credat Judæus !* It’s a fact.

“ Soon after us arrived the tandem, and, of course, Dick’s first inquiry was, who drove the mail, the Defiance, and the other coaches which run through the town ; and the next, the residences of their respective wives and families, to which George Blunt answered, ‘ I neither knows nor cares.’

“ The rest of the party dropped in by degrees, and although we had dined at five, and it was now only seven, it was thought requisite to have some refreshment. Anchovy toasts, devilled biscuits, mutton chops, kidneys, and grilled chickens, were ordered, and the cook to his (for he is a dog-cook), great disgust, was summoned

to the kitchen from his beer and tobacco at the tap. These, with sundry glasses of warm with, and cold without, huge pitchers of XXX, and tankards of cold swizzle, proved so good, that it was carried *nem. con.* to have a second edition of them after the play, and invite old Chatty and Jack Greatman to partake.

“ Most of you know Jack, because you have heard him sing, do a bit of ventriloquism, and imitate the French-horn, keyed bugle, and all sorts of music in my rooms. His history is a curious, but by no means an uncommon one. His father was a highly respectable tradesman, and gave Jack a good education; but, before he could apprentice him to any business, misfortunes came upon him in rapid succession, and Jack, having nothing to do, hired a buggy, and a servant with a livery-coat, and a hat with a gold band round it, and went over to France, where he had a capital lark; and after he had spent all his money, and *spouted* the trap and horse to raise the necessary, returned to find the old man a bankrupt, and himself penniless.

“ He might have got work if he had wished,

but he did not; he entertained very gentlemanly notions about the respectability of doing nothing.

‘*Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis,*’

was his motto. He lived for some time on the good-nature and hospitality of his relations and friends in the neighbourhood, and having plenty of leisure for practice, became a tolerable proficient in the arts of singing, and those other accomplishments, for which he is so justly celebrated.

“When his friends began to think that a song, however well sung, and a story, however well told, were but a poor recompence for sundry slices of beef, mutton, or pork, with vegetables and bread to match—not to mention quarts of ale and glasses of grog—for Jack was always what he calls a ‘wet un,’ they gave him very plain hints that he must look out for a cupboard of his own. This was a puzzler. Jack looked about him, and saw no prospect of a cupboard, or of any thing to put into it, if he were possessed of it. He tried to think for

what he was fitted. The law? He did not like the idea of being nailed to a desk, copying musty deeds and parchments, and being obliged to work by folios, like a stone-breaker on the road, who is paid by bushels—he wanted to work ‘by the day.’ Divinity? He had been bred up a dissenter—a baptist; and he thought, as he said, he ‘could come it as strong as the minister,’ and made an experiment before a looking-glass, but burst out into so loud a laugh at the sight of his funny face, as convinced him that that was ‘no go!’ Physic? It was dirty work—and what was worse, it was *night* work; and after nine Jack was generally head-man in a public; president, or vice, of the Harmonic Society; and before twelve, drunk, or very near it. ‘No go’ again.

“But amongst the company, the Harmonics, was an apothecary who wanted an assistant, and he thought Jack would just suit him. He agreed to take him without a premium, upon condition that he was to keep sober whenever his master was drunk, and *vice versá*. Jack pounded away at the mortar, and sung over his

work, and thought himself established for life ; but, after a fortnight, he told his employer he could not stand it any longer.

“ ‘ Why not, my dear Jack ? ’ inquired the doctor.

“ ‘ You recollect our agreement, master ? ’

“ ‘ Perfectly.’

“ ‘ Well, then, I’ve been with you fourteen days, and you have not given me a chance yet. I can’t stand it, and won’t.’

“ Master stayed at home and got drunk that night, and Jack had his turn, which he kept up for a week, when master interfered, and he was obliged to yield. How long, by the ‘ bucket ’ system, they might have gone on together, it is impossible to say, but a little event occurred that compelled them to part.

“ Jack’s master had a patient about a mile from the town, in a retired part of a village. As there was nothing to be done in ‘ the surgery,’ and when that was the case, mischief was sure to ensue, he thought the best thing he could do would be to take Jack with him. They went to the cottage, and master went up stairs

to his patient, leaving Jack below with half a dozen old women, who usually congregate in the house of death or illness.

“ Jack never could be quiet, and recollecting that he had some thoughts of turning preacher, thought a favourable opportunity was before him to try his powers on the congregation assembled. The noise he made was so tremendous, that the old women rushed out of the house, and the patient, who had been listening to him through the crevices in the floor, went off in a swoon, which the doctor mistook for death. He ran down stairs, and found Jack rolling on the floor in convulsions of laughter, which he undertook to cure by thrashing him soundly with a flail which stood conveniently in the corner.

“ Jack could not brook this—no gentleman could—so he gave warning, and cut physic and his master for ever.

“ Soon after this he luckily met with a country squire, of the Tony Lumpkin breed, with more money than brains, and with *him* he lived, until he was turned out of doors to make room

for a squiress, to whom, the squire thought, he might communicate some secrets that were better untold.

“After many adventures, which, with one exception, I will not record, he has gone on ever since, sometimes flourishing, but generally dependent on his wife’s exertions, who gains a scanty livelihood by dress-making.

“The tale I mean to tell is this :—There is a gardener in Abingdon—a regular *character*. He was missing from his native town for many years, and what had become of him no one could tell—nor can they now say for certain how he was employed during his absence. When he returned, he proved himself an adept in the arts of conjuring, pricking in the garter, thimble-rig, eating fire, and other such sciences as the frequenters of fairs and races are wont to practise.

“ ‘Knowing Jemmy,’ as he was called, entered into a treaty, offensive and defensive, with Jack Greatman, and undertook to teach him his profession, which was more suited to his incli-

nations than either of the three that are designated the 'learned,' *par excellence*.

" Jack soon acquired sufficient skill to make a very good confederate, and it was resolved that the first exhibition of the partners should take place at Tubney fair, about four miles from home. A few yards of canvass, an old deal table, and a green baize cloth were hired, and a barrel of strong beer procured on trust, with the understanding that the cask was to be returned with the money on the following day.

" The tent was erected—the table, with its green baize, covered with the instruments of art, and packs of rather dirty cards. The barrel was broached, tasted, and pronounced to be excellent. Jack stationed himself outside, dressed in a kind of Chinese costume; and after crying out, in sonorous tones, 'Walk in, gentlemen and ladies, walk in, and behold the wonderful, astonishing, miraculous, never-before-seen-in-any-other-part-of-the-world conjurer—the Emperor Rum-fum-qui, who not only displays the wonderful secrets of his art, but gives you half-a-pint of *strong* beer into the bargain, and all for

the *small* charge of one shilling—children and workey people *half* price.’ He sounded a very clear French-horn note or two through his fist, and introduced the assembled crowd to Jemmy, who was dressed as conjurers used to be represented, with a long beard, a pair of spectacles, and a black cap, a long black robe, marked with hieroglyphics, a black wand in his left hand, and a (stuffed) black cat on his right shoulder.

“ Their success exceeded their warmest expectations, and Jack, who was money-taker, had his pockets full of silver and halfpence. The barrel was beginning to sound rather hollow, and as Jemmy was fatigued by his exertions, the canvass curtain was dropped, and the company informed, that the performances would recommence as soon as the Emperor Rum-fum-qui had eaten his imperial meal—which consisted of two red herrings—‘sojers,’ as he called them, *sericè*, I presume—a bunch of inions, and a tuppenny buster ! Jack despised such humble fare, and went to a stand, and had threepen’orth of ‘sassiges,’ standing. When he returned, he found his master pulling away at the beer-cup,

as he thought, very unfairly. A laudable spirit of rivalry was excited, and each endeavoured to get a better share than the other. The consequence was, that both of them got very tipsy; and when the company returned, Jack could not stand, but sat on the empty barrel, taking the money, and laughing, ready to kill himself. Jemmy tried his old tricks, but his eye and hand both failed him; he burnt his mouth with the hot tow—pulled out a front tooth, instead of the fifty yards of tape—lost his peas under the table—turned up the wrong card every time; and, in trying to play with the three balls, tumbled backwards off his throne, perfectly insensible to the kicks and cuffs that were mercilessly bestowed upon him by the angry crowd, who insisted on having back their money.

“ Jack demurred to this, and held out as long as he could speak or see—which was not very long—for, ‘like master like man,’ he fell over on his back, and the crowd robbed him of every shilling he had; and, not contented with inflicting this mark of their indignation upon

him, pulled down the tent, tore the canvass and baize to ribbons, broke up the table, chair, and cask, and made a bonfire with them.

“ When Jemmy woke it was ‘pitch dark;’ he sat up, rubbed his eyes, and wondered where he was. By degrees his senses returned, and all the events of the day recurred to him; but where was the tent and the other articles that he had borrowed? Where was Jack? He stood upon his feet as well as he could, and looked about him, but in vain; it was too dark to discern any thing; he listened attentively, and heard, as he thought, some one groaning. He approached the spot, and tumbled over somebody, or something; he sat up again, and was pleased to find that it was a fellow-creature. He felt for the face, and catching hold of the nose whence the snores, which he had mistaken for groans, were progressing, gave it a hearty pull, which produced something that sounded exceedingly like—‘let me alone!’ The voice was the voice of Jack. Jemmy began to show his joy at having found his confederate, by kicking him most vigorously. A wrangle ensued,

in which a great deal of eloquence was displayed on both sides, and *that* led to a mutual agreement to fight it out. Finding that they could not stand up, after one or two unsuccessful attempts to do so, an amicable arrangement was entered into, to have a 'turn up' sitting down.

"They were too weak to hurt one another much, and, having ascertained that their honour was satisfied by the bleeding of their noses and an increased obscurity of vision, they shook hands and proceeded, relying upon each other for support, to look about for their theatre and properties. It is needless to say they could not find them. Each accused the other of having stolen them, which led to a second engagement, which terminated in their both falling perfectly insensible.

"In the morning Jack was found by a labourer snug asleep in a ditch ; but Jemmy could no where be seen. Jack recounted all he could recollect of the events of the preceding day and night, and promised his friend a quart at the 'dog house,' if he would assist him in searching for his master.

“After examining every ditch and pit in the neighbourhood to no purpose, faint cries of ‘Help me out!’ were heard from a distance. Following the sounds, they came to a large rushy pool, and there was poor Jemmy standing up to his neck in a snipe-bog. Jemmy was obese, and luckily, fat floats. A rope was obtained, and the conjurer dragged out more dead than alive.

“The ill-success of this first attempt deterred Jack from pursuing the profession further, and he set up entirely on his own account as a singer at public meetings, and a seller of dogs to the Oxford men, of whom, sometimes, he made a pretty good thing, and might have done well if he had had a capital, and could have stood *tick*.

“But, to return to our adventures. We finished our liquids and went to the theatre, though Tripes begged hard to be allowed to stay behind and have one more tankard of ale. Nor should we have been able to drag him off had he not been assured that there was a capital tap next door to the barn, which was fitted up as a theatre.

“The house was nearly full, and we all be-

haved remarkably well—for *Oxford men*—until the first piece was over ; when a move was made for refreshments, Tripes leading the way. I slipped behind the scenes to congratulate old Chatty on the admirable way in which he had played his part. On inquiring for him, I was directed up a ladder to his ‘dressing-room,’ where he was changing for the afterpiece. After stumbling up the steps as well as I could, I found myself in a loft covered with tiles, through which, in many places, a view of the heavens could be obtained ; and, stepping over the rafters, came to a piece of canvass, through which the rays of a rushlight cast a sickly gleam. I lifted it, and shall not readily forget the scene that presented itself to my view. There stood poor old Chatty, trembling like an aspen-leaf — his teeth chattering with cold, with nothing on his lower man but his drawers and a pair of grey silk stockings. In his hands he held a pair of black silk sit-down-upons, which he was examining by the faint light of the rush.

“‘What am I to do?—what *am* I to do? Confound the ladder!—confound the nail!—





Our Chatty is great tribulation

it goes right across — fourteen inches long at least—not another pair in the town that will fit me — can't possibly go on in these — what can I do? uh! uh! uh!" and he shuddered with cold.

" 'What's the matter, old gentleman?' I inquired, stepping forward and suppressing my laughter as well as I could — for he had his wig and pigtail on, with a handkerchief round his neck, tied in an enormous bow, that made his comical face look irresistibly ludicrous.

" 'Matter! Ah, my dear young friend, how d'ye do? uh! uh! uh! I am dying with cold—perished to death, and have split my unmentionables. Oh! that infernal ladder! there's a nail in it, and as I crept down backwards it caught me—the silk is rather old (forty years I should have guessed)—and, as I stooped to put on these rascally tight shoes, the rent extended suddenly — crack! and here I am, overture nearly over, and no unmentionables to go on with—uh! uh! uh!'

"I offered my services to run for a tailor, but he said there was no time for that.

" 'Oh, dear! oh, dear! I'll slip off—put my

cloak round me, get into a fly, and never come near this infernal cold hole again. Jackman ! Mrs. Jackman ! Miss Jackman !

“ ‘ Sir,’ replied a sweet voice ; ‘ what did you want ?’

“ ‘ Play the overture over again, and send on Patter with a comic song—let him sing it three times over, whether he is *encored* or not.’

“ ‘ Any thing wrong, sir ?’ inquired the lady, lifting aside the canvass, which separated the male from the female *rooms*, and tittering so enticingly that I immediately burst into a fit of laughter that made my sides ache, and old Chatty as savage as a fury.

“ He stood eyeing us both alternately, and muttering ‘ curses not loud but deep,’ displaying more real passion and ferocity than he had done in playing ‘ Sir Anthony.’

“ ‘ Let me mend them, sir ; I’ll not be a minute about it,’ said the lady, laughing outright.

“ ‘ Take them, then, you ——,’ and bang went the tattered garments at the lady’s head, and he sat down on his trunk, looking spike-

heads and blunderbusses at me without saying a word.

“ I went to the top of the ladder, and begged the principal tragedian to get me a glass of hot brandy-and-water ; and, when it was procured, returned to the old gentleman, who had just recovered his garment and his temper, and made him drink it off. This rendered him happy and comfortable, and in his gratitude for my kindness, he forgot and forgave my former misconduct.

“ When the overture was over, and the comic song thrice sung, we went down — old Chatty descending very gingerly to avoid the nail. The bell rang and the curtain rose. Old Chatty went on, and I remained behind to chat with the manager. Before the first scene was over, I heard a great noise before the curtain, and imprudently exposed myself at the wings in trying to ascertain the cause of it.

“ Tripes and our party caught sight of me, and immediately commenced calling out, ‘ Turn him out ! Throw him over ! Off, off, off ! ’ In which they were joined by the οἱ ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ.

“Old Chatty, who was in one of his best ‘situations,’ and knew not the meaning of these hostile cries, after playing in dumb show for five minutes, got in a rage, and, stepping to the foot-lights, bowed three times with his hand on his heart, and begged to know in what he had offended the audience.

“‘Three cheers for old snuff and cigars,’ cried Tripes, and three rounds of applause, with ‘one cheer more,’ followed.

“‘Ladies and gentlemen,’ continued Chatty, bowing, and taking a huge pinch of snuff, ‘may I trust to that candour which always reigns in the breast of an English audience (hurrah ! go *it* !), and ask for that explanation of my never-before-upon-any-occasion-experienced reception which a Briton never refuses to give ?’ (Hurrah ! old un.)

“No answer being returned, he bowed to the boxes, pit, and gallery successively, and was about to resume the dialogue, when Tripes, who was holding on by one of the pillars, began to address the house.

“‘Gentlemen and ladies——.’

“‘Ladies fust,’ said a voice from the gallery.

“‘Turn *him* out,’ cried another.

“‘No! no! hear! hear!’ and ‘a speech from the gen’leman in lick!’ induced Tripes to proceed.

“‘Ladies and gentlemen (hiccup), fair play’s a jewel, (hiccup), the bills say, No admittance behind the scenes, and I can see distinctly, (Fudge — you squints horrible), I say I can see distinctly—when I shut one eye—my friend, Wydeawake, just behind that tree (why, it’s a pump—ha! ha! ha!) well — much obliged for the information — behind that pump, (hiccup), and I’ll have him off, or else I’ll go on (hiccup) myself.’

“‘Bravo! off!’ Hisses and all sorts of noises peculiar to theatres, and ‘another place’ succeeded; but, before I could obey the order and leave the stage, Tripes made a spring from the boxes, and by using the fiddler’s back for a stepping-place, leapt upon the stage. The curtain fell amidst laughter, applause, and hisses. A scene took place behind the scenes that baffles

all description ; for the rest of our party ‘ followed the leader,’ with the exception of Tom Springer, who was too much convulsed with laughter to jump, and had thrown himself backward in his seat, showing his delight by clapping his hands over his head, and grinning fiercely.

“ I expostulated with Tripes and his friends, but to no purpose ; the actresses all fled, and the actors began to look big and threaten. Old Chatty walked up and down, muttering, ‘ Shameful ! blackguards ! disgusting — tell the vice-chancellor—the proctors—rusticated — expelled —ruined for life, see if I don’t.’ The constables were sent for by the mayor, who happened to be in the house, but before they could arrive, Solomon, who was warmed with too much Dutch courage, struck the comic-singer for asking him to ‘ stand a quart,’ and a general fight ensued, in the midst of which that mischievous dog Tripes drew up the curtain, and called upon the audience to walk in and see the wild ‘ beastisses.’

“ Of course, a rush did take place from the gallery to the stage, and we were nearly being

overpowered by numbers—for the Abingdonians took, and justly, the part of the players, when the mayor, with three or four constables, ‘came on’ to ‘play his part,’ and, appealing to me in a gentlemanly way, begged of me to interfere with my friends, and prevent poor Jackman and his family being ruined by the damage his scenery and properties would sustain, and by being compelled to close his theatre. This was putting it in a proper way, and we gave him three cheers and left the stage, *viá* the orchestra, followed by every one but Solomon, who was washing his nose under the pump.

“While we were waiting for the play to begin again, Tripes whispered to me, ‘I’ve got it.’

“‘Got what?’

“‘Oh! never you mind — I’ve got it,’ (hiccup).

“An unaccountable delay took place from some cause or other in the raising the curtain, and the audience began to display their impatience by whistling, knocking with their sticks, and kicking against the sides of the boxes; when old Chatty, putting aside ‘greeny,’ stepped

forward with his hair *au naturel*, and in a dreadful passion appealed to the 'ladies and gentlemen' against the blackguardly and disgraceful conduct of some *gentleman* — *ironicè dictum* — who had stolen his wig.

"Amidst loud cries of 'shame! shame! never mind, go on without it,' Tripes rose, and, putting the missing article on the end of a stick, handed it over the orchestra to Chatty, favouring him and the house with the repetition of the Joseph Miller, 'that he was not the first old gentleman that could not keep his hair on his head.' The gallery of course laughed, and Chatty 'cut a mug,' in which rage and politeness, arising from the fear of losing a good customer in the cigar line, were so oddly blended, that the house was restored to its good humour, and all would have gone on well had not Jack Greatman roared out from the pit, 'Three cheers for the gen'leman what prigged the wig,' which produced a great uproar, and, amidst cries of every kind—screaming, screeching, and hurrahing, the decent part of the townsmen and their female friends left the house, and the

mayor and constables were obliged again to interfere.

“Quiet was partially restored, the play went on, and all would have ended well yet, but for Tripes, who, observing a fellow in the gallery with a face like a round of beef, and a mouth like an almanac — reaching from one *ear* to the other, called out, ‘There’s a mouth for mutton!’ pointing to the individual at the same time with his stick, that there might be no mistake.

“A dialogue ensued, in which Charterhouse decidedly proved its superiority, and the advantage of being situated so near Smithfield. The ‘house divided,’ and the ayes were in favour of Tripes, which so enraged the man with the open countenance, that he offered to fight his enemy for a quart.

“‘Done,’ cried Tripes, and, pulling out sixpence, threw it on the stage, saying, ‘There’s my stake, now post your’s;’ a proceeding that elicited three rounds of applause, which were repeated with greater spirit when Tripes began pulling off his coat.

“The mayor interfered for the third time, and

Jackman wisely dropped the curtain, and, unheard, announced the performances for the following evening.

“As I knew that a general fight would begin if the Oxonians and the townsmen went out together, I begged the mayor would clear the house and the yard, and suffer us to remain until the crowd had left and dispersed themselves. To this he agreed, and, keeping fast hold, as I thought, of Tripes by the coat-collar, I was in hopes all would have ended quietly and peaceably. Hearing a noise of scuffling at the door, to my great surprise, I saw Tripes, who had slipped out of his coat and left it in my hand, squaring and hitting at the man with a mouth, who, though six feet high, and big enough to swallow his little adversary, was begging and entreating of him, in the most abject terms, not to hurt him.

“I leaped into the pit and seized Tripes round the waist, where I held him until his foe had vanished—which he did as fast as he could ; and he had promised me, upon his honour, he would put on his coat and be perfectly quiet.

“We left the house, and, instead of being

attacked, as we expected, were greeted with loud cheers, especially Tripes, who was saluted as a 'plucky little-un,' and in high favour for having 'tackled' the biggest bully in the town. Solomon, who was envious of his friend's praises, thought to acquire some little glory before he left, and accordingly selected a very little snob, and kicked him very hard. To his great surprise and annoyance, the lad turned round and returned the compliment. Tripes called, 'A ring! a ring!' which was immediately formed; but Solomon positively declined the combat as being ungentlemanly, and was compelled, amidst the hootings and hissings of both parties, to pay a sovereign for the assault.

"Old Chatty, who had resumed his mufti, came out in a very bad humour; and as he politely but positively refused our invitation to sup with us, and we could not do without him, we lifted him on our shoulders and bore him off in triumph to the Crown and Thistle, where he found it useless to grumble, and being fond of the good things of this life, wisely made up his mind to look cheerful, and eat and drink heartily.

“The supper was excellently cooked, and, as Chatty quoted,

‘I smell it, upon my life it will do well,’

we all of us did justice to it. After supper, instructions were given to the waiters to be perpetually bringing in something drinkable, until further orders, and Tripes proposed ‘beginning the evening’ by calling on old Chatty, (who was abusing the landlord’s cigars) for a song. He immediately complied; and, though age had deprived his voice of its original power and sweetness, sung one of Dibdin’s old ones with great taste, and, of course, had his ‘health and song’ drunk, accompanied with ‘A jolly good song and very well sung,’ by all the party. Jack Greatman next favoured us, and noise and grimace made up for judgment and good taste, with the majority of us. Other songs and toasts followed in rapid succession, and as the jugs and bowls were emptied, the faster and louder grew the fun and noise. Practical jokes commenced, in which, of course, Tripes took the lead, by popping a tallow candle into Springer’s mouth, who was, as usual, half asleep and making

hideous faces, by opening and shutting his eyes in a very peculiar manner. Solomon found a pair of snuffers, a nutmeg-grater, and two halves of lemon in his coat-pocket, which he threw, one by one, as he abstracted them, at the head of his tormentor, who of course 'ducked,' and Jack Greatman became 'receiver general' of the missiles.

"Being more than three parts sprung, Jack was indignant, and told Stingo he was a fool, and that if he insulted him again he'd resent it.

"Solomon turned up his nose, which was quite unnecessary, as it's a regular pug, and declined noticing the threats of a *snob*.

"'Snob ! who do *you* call a snob ?' replied Jack, rising from his chair, and looking magnificent, 'has your mother parted with her mangle yet ? By the blood of the Mondays ! Snob indeed ! I haven't the pleasure of your intimate acquaintance, but I'll lay a pound your father's only a shopman.'

"'My father, sirrah, is a highly respectable brewer ; brews the best porter in London,' said Solomon, looking grand.

“ ‘Yes,’ replied Jack, ‘and would keep you and your brother and sisters on his grains, if he did not use nothing but quassia and molasses.’

“ ‘Come, come,’ cried Tripes, ‘don’t be impudent, Jack, but sit down directly ;’ which he did, into a large bowl of red-hot punch, which Tripes had deposited in his chair, in order that his person might meet with a ‘warm reception.’ The china bowl, of course, fell a victim to Jack’s weight ; and Solomon cried with delight as he saw him capering about the room, holding his scalding garments as far off from his skin as possible, and grinning with agony.

“ ‘Bravo ! beautiful grinning ! Bring a horse-collar,’ shouted the company.

“ ‘Now, Jack,’ said Tripes, ‘give us a bit of ventriloquism.’

“ ‘Can’t, master, indeed I can’t, without some more rosin, and (in a whisper) send round the hat.’

“A jug of hot punch being supplied, and a collection of twenty-five shillings pocketed, Jack made a fool of himself for five minutes in his vocation, and occupied another ten in praising him-

self, to the detriment of the immortal professional mimes of London, dead or alive, and Mr. Morgan, of the Peacock, into the bargain ; all of whom, in his opinion, were far inferior to himself.

“ A horn being heard in the distance, Dick bolted to see the Stroud mail ‘ up ’ come in, and Tripes pretended to go with him — how *he* employed himself will be seen presently. He was apparently quite sober by this time, and looked all alive, as Chatty said,

‘ By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours, that did seem to strangle him,’

when he left the playhouse. Let him be drunk as he will, a jug of *good* beer always sobers him.

“ Tom Springer and little Rooke, who were verging toward a state of somnolent inebriety, went out zigzag-ging, arm-in-arm, to call on a friend, one of our men, who is rusticated and lodging with his wife in the town, and I may as well finish their adventures at once.

“ When they got to the house, of course, every body was gone to bed ; but a repetition of ‘ hard knocks,’ in which they were aided by the

watchman, for half-a-crown, produced a slipshod maid, upon whom Springer would have made an ungenerous attack, had she not been too quick for him, and scudded up stairs, screeching loud enough to rouse landlord, landlady, and the lodgers.

“An explanation ensued, which, though it was rather enigmatical, from the obfuscated state of the invading parties, convinced Mr. Screw, the lodger, that Messrs. Springer and Rooke would not retire without tasting his tap.

“Grog was produced, flanked with a box of Chatty’s best cigars; and Springer, though no smoker, was weak enough to funk declining a ‘weed,’ and puffed powerfully and awkwardly, as the uninitiated in fumigating are wont to do. The harder he puffed the wiser he looked, and discovering a poll-parrot in a wire prison, undertook to give her a taste of the weed which grew in her own climes.

“‘What’s o’clock?’ cried poll.

“‘Rather late, poll.’—(Puff! puff! puff!)

“‘Who are you?’ continued poll, shaking her head, and sneezing like a human.

“ ‘Master of Arts, and Pro—’ (puff! puff! puff!) ‘and you’re a very pretty poll.’

“ ‘Pretty poll,’ repeated the bird, and fell in an atrophy off her perch.

“Screw was dismayed, and expressed his fears that the bird was dead, which would infallibly break Mrs. Screw’s heart.

“The mention of Mrs. Screw, to whom he had never been introduced, suggested to Tom the absolute necessity of going up into her bedroom, to be presented to her in proper form. In vain did Screw suggest deferring it until another time, and hint at the impropriety of the proceeding. Tom was too polite to quit the house without seeing the mistress, and, divining the direction of her bedroom, proceeded to ascend the stairs. ‘Sich a gitting up stairs there never was seen,’ for Screw caught him by the coat-tail, which ungratefully ‘forsook his master,’ and let Mr. Screw into an inglorious tumble. Mrs. Screw, who, as young brides are wont to do, had been listening, horror-struck, to the proposal of grog and cigars at that inconvenient season, and the still more awkward proposal of

an introduction to a stranger in her nightcap, closed, locked, and bolted her bedroom door. Tom heard the click and scrunch of lock and bolt, and in very eloquent terms applied his mouth to the keyhole, and requested admission. Not receiving any reply, and feeling very thirsty, he tumbled down stairs to his friend Rooke, who was busily engaged in trying to bring Polly to life again, by pouring raw brandy down her bill with a teaspoon, for which Tom called him 'a beast,' and knocked him down. For an undergraduate to return the blow was a breach of discipline, so Rooke contented himself by putting his head between the M.A.'s legs, and throwing him over his back on his nose, which relieved the oppression on his brain, by discharging a quart of the 'vital stream.'

"Peace was made by Screw, and another glass of half brandy and half water convinced the parties of the necessity of retiring, and going home.

"Tom insisted on walking, and Rooke was forced to consent, upon pain of being 'imposed,' if he refused. Tom Springer borrowed a large

stick, as a protection against thieves, with which he so belaboured one of the watch, who was trying to convince him that the Farringdon road was not the way to Oxford, that the poor 'guardian of the night' was ill for a week.

"They got on pretty well to Bagley wood, tacking of course, and chiefly on the loosing tack. There Tom brought up, all standing, and insisted on passing the night *al fresco*, in one of the seats near the 'old man's gate.' Rooke, who was drunk and tired, willingly assented, and there we luckily discovered them, by the light of the fly lamps, and in spite of Tom's threats carried them home.

"To return to the Crown and Thistle.

"Many of the men were preparing to go home, having the terrors of the Dean before their eyes, and, of course, none of them had any money, and solicited me to 'settle every thing;' which was very agreeable, as I had just fourteen shillings in my pocket.

"Jack was gone after Dick, by my orders, and old Chatty began to entertain me with a long discussion on the superiority of his snuffs,

over those of Messrs. Fribourg and Treyer, of the Haymarket, and the very excellent coffee which—real Mocha—procured from an intimate friend of his in Smyrna—Mrs. C. made every evening. Then he digressed about the sad falling off of modern dramatists and modern actors, and told me many excellent anecdotes of the Kembles, Dowton, Munden, and other old favourites of his own day. Thence he descended to the merits of Mrs. C.'s mutton-broth, and some very capital whiskey, which he had had sent him by an uncle in Campbell town. I grew fidgety and uneasy, but was forced to listen to his complaints, touching Mr. —, of Ch. ch, who owed him £4 15s., and Mr. —, of Corpus, who had let his bill of £2 2s. run for four terms, and left him, and dealt with Bryant or Castle; and sundry other instances of pecuniary defalcations and disappointments, in which I was not at all interested.

“Poor old Chatty, with a kind heart, and the very best intentions, ruined a fine business from want of capital, temper, and a regular Oxford-bred tradesman's education. No man,

who has not had a *pater*, an *avus*, a *proavus*, and *atavus* in trade at Oxford, ought ever to think of setting up business in that university. It is a system *per se*, and all the modes of book-keeping, by single and double entry, that are taught in the best commercial academies, cannot give a stranger an insight into it. It's unlike the smallpox, and cannot be caught by inoculation.

“ I was forced to rid myself of the old man by promising to go to Short-cut cottage, to eat some of Mrs. C.'s mutton-broth, and taste his uncle's whiskey.

“ When he was gone, I roused up Solomon, who was sound asleep, and snoring awfully, on the sofa, and told him, as I had no tin, I hoped he would pay the bill. He stared incredulously, and, buttoning up his pockets, swore vehemently that he would not be imposed upon in that way, and even refused to lend me £10. I gave the beast a killing look, and emptied a decanter of water into his trouser's pocket.

“ When the waiter brought in the bill, I went into the little bar and told the landlord (who

was smoking a churchwarden), that most of the men had gone off, and I had not sufficient money to settle for all, but, if he would take my card, 'Wydeawake, St. Peter's College, Oxford,' I would be responsible for the amount.

" 'Much obliged, sir, I'm sure—but that arn't at all in my line. Charles, the waiter, is responsible to me; if he likes to trust, well and good—it arn't in my line.'

"Charles fortunately knew me, having been underwaiter at the Star, and I easily arranged that he should come over next day and receive his money. I almost made up my mind never to remain sober again, as the Sober-Johns always have to 'stand Sam'—as Solomon calls paying for all.

"Just as this pleasant arrangement was completed, George Blunt opened the bar-door—without knocking, of course, and said to me:—

" 'I wishes as you'd come out, there's that young Gallows as comed in the tandem, a been a playing the very devil with Scuffledust's fly!'

"I went out, and, on opening the door of the vehicle, found two barber's poles, a pair of post-

boy's boots, three sign-boards, a stable-bucket, five knockers, nine bell-pulls, a door-plate, part of a truss of hay, a gridiron, a frying-pan, and a stable-lantern still alight, stowed away in the fly.

“ ‘And that arn't all, neither,’ said George ; ‘for he's been and unbuckled all the harness, and changed the hooks and bits, and when ‘fust-turn-out's’ wanted, I 'm blowed if he won't have to whistle for his saddle.’

“ I inquired where Mr. Tripes, who, I knew, was the *causi tanti mali*, was.

“ ‘He's in the tap,’ replied George, ‘a making of all the postboys tosticated with malt licker.’

“ I sent the waiter for him, and insisted that the tandem and the fly should be got ready directly. I took Tripes with me into the bar to prevent further mischief, and allowed him one pint of ale, while I smoked one pipe with the landlord. Just as we were finishing our supererogatory amusements, George again entered, dragging ‘little Snap’ by a halter.

“ ‘Here's a pretty go, master ; I 'm blessed if I stands it.’

“ ‘What is it, George?’

“ ‘What is it? it’s all werry well o’ you axing that ere; but if Mr. Job had been alive and kicking, I’m blessed if *his* patience ’ud a stood it. —Kim here, you varmint,’ (to the dog).

“ ‘Well, but what’s the matter?’ inquired his master.

“ ‘Why, this here nasty little twud has been and yeat a postboy’s saddle flaps, one skirt of a great coat, and six new olters; least ways if she arn’t a yet ’um, she’s been and knarred ’um all to ribbons.—Kim here, you varmint.’

“ ‘Well, the gentleman will make all that right, I dare say.’

“ ‘*You* dare say, that’s more nor I do; for she belongs to that ere werry keveer kiddy with the sandy hair and a stingy look.’

“ Solomon, who staggered in just at the moment, and heard this unflattering description of his personalities, looked malicious at George, who took no further notice of him than to observe:—

“ ‘This here’s the precious sample as I alludes to—you draw him, master, while I goes and looks to the hosses.’

“The landlord mentioned to Solomon the facts which George had stated, and suggested a due recompense, to which Stingo demurred energetically, until the waiter was called and ordered to lock Snap up, and not let her go until the damages were assessed and paid; when, seeing that Snap was in danger of being imprisoned, and perhaps kidnapped, he liberally offered—one shilling. A sovereign was named, and eventually paid.

“George entered again.

“‘I’m blessed if there arn’t another precious go, master!’

“‘What now, George?’

“‘What, indeed! Why, one of them ere gentlemen in No. 2, as had the beef-stakes and inons, and two gallons of beer, and come in on a spavined horse, gets up and tells me as his friend ’ull pay; and, before I could go and ax him, I’m blessed if he did not jump upon *his* horse, and gallop off like blazes—done me clean.’

“‘Sorry for it, George; but ——.’

“‘Sorry be ——; that won’t pay me for two feeds of oats, and threepenn’orth of old

beans. And then there's two gentlemen as is too bosky to wag, wants a shay to Oxford.'

" 'Very well ; what horses have we in ?'

" 'Why, there's Fair Helen, and Harleykin Billy — that ere jumping horse as you bought out o' the commercial's trap.'

" 'Well, they'll do.'

" 'And what's little Jemmy to do for his boots, as that ere little genelman (pointing to Tripes) stole ?'

" 'Wrap his legs up in a hayband,' cried Tripes. 'I'll stand heavy to any amount.'

" 'Will you?' cried George, 'you're a trump, and he shall ride bare as a bird, all the way for sich a one.'

" Tripes was delighted at his liberality being so justly appreciated, and, Dick coming in, I saw them safe off in the cart, and carried Solomon and his dog into the fly.

" When we got to the bottom of the hill in Bagley Wood, the driver pulled up, and, on looking out to ascertain the *pour quoi*, I saw Dick and Tripes 'rubbing down' themselves and the horses, who were amusing themselves with kicking and biting one another as usual.

“ ‘What’s the matter?’

“ ‘Matter!’ cried Dick; ‘why, I merely got down for two minutes, and Tripes got into the driving-seat, and swore he’d drive home. I tried all I could to dissuade him, but he would not yield, so I did, and the stupid ——.’

“ ‘Mind your eye, Dick,’ cried Tripes; ‘no abuse.’

“ ‘—— Fool pulled the wrong rope —— run the leader up a bank, and capsized the trap.’

“ ‘Never mind, old chap, better luck another time—all right—drive on, Dick.’

“ ‘Well, here we are safe and sound,’ cried Dick and Tripes both; ‘floor your taps, and let’s begin the evening.’ ” Carried without a division.

CHAPTER X.

THREE or four days after the unlucky accident that befel Mr. Downe and Mr. Tripes—I allude to their being spilt out of the tandem, on the Abingdon road—I shut up the common-room earlier than usual, as all its members were out at a party ; and just as Tom tolled nine o'clock, I left college to enjoy my supper with Mrs. Priggins, who had promised me some stewed oysters, of her own preparing, as a treat.

As I walked down St Peter's Lane, my mouth watered at the thought of the dainty dish in store for me ; for I was very hungry, having purposely refrained from my usual bread-and-cheese and ale in the buttery. I opened my door with the latch-key, and, instead of hearing the merry laugh of Mrs. P., or her voice rebuking the

children or the maid, I was surprised at the sounds of violent hysterical sobbings, proceeding from the parlour. I entered the room, and, instead of the neat, white supper-cloth, and other indispensables for our meal, I saw nothing on the table but Mrs. P.'s elbows, supporting her face, which was covered up in a dingy pocket-handkerchief, from the folds of which issued the melancholy sounds which I had heard.

"Polly, my dear," I exclaimed, in endearing terms and sympathetic accents, "my dearest Polly, what *is* the meaning of this, and where *are* the oysters?"

Instead of a reply, these reasonable inquiries merely produced a more vigorous repetition of sobs, accompanied by the devil's tattoo on the carpet. No one was in the room to whom I could apply for an explanation but Master Nicomedes, who was sitting upon a footstool, making a popgun out of the top joint of my new flute, or rather trying to hide the half-finished weapon from me by cramming as much of it as he could into his trousers-pocket.

"Nic, boy, what ails your mother?" I inquired.

"Ow can hi tell, hi should like to know? She ha' been hat hit all the harternoon."

"Where are the oysters, boy?"

"Highsters," cried Nic, turning very pale; "what, do you mean them things has was in the basin, and looked, for hall the world, like garden-snails with their jackets hoff?"

"Yes, to be sure; where are they?"

"Ho! *hi* heat *them* hall."

"Oh, you did, did you! and pray what may that be protruding from your pocket?"

"Ho! this ere? that ere's nuffin—but—a—a—a—"

"Give it me, sir."

Nic reluctantly produced the flute-joint, which was already in a state of weaponly forwardness, having the blowing-hole tightly stopped up with a vent-peg out of a beer-barrel, and the upper end drilled with a red-hot poker, and, of course, quite spoilt for musical purposes.

"Patience is a virtue," as the copy-books say; but a man must have more of it than I have if he could stand having his oysters devoured, and his new flute ruined, without losing a conside-

rable portion of it. I confess that I lost all mine, and, seizing a stick resembling an *appoggiatura*, slim and slender, with a nob at the end, I gave Master Nic a sound thrashing with it.

Mrs. P. bore the shrieks of her darling child—for, being the youngest, of course he is the pet—without remark, until a badly-aimed blow, intended for his back, fell upon his head, and elicited a roar extraordinary. Then she dropped her handkerchief tragically, and, showing her “red, red” eyes and dishevelled locks, uttered the Cæsarean “*tu brute*,” which, in English, sounded very like “you brute!” She then relapsed into her former attitude, and resumed the “silent system,” nor could any of my coaxings, reproachings, revilings, or entreatings—for I tried all by turns—induce her to explain the cause of her violent grief.

I think I recollect a passage in Euripides, which alludes to the advantages which a male has over a female in cases of family disquietudes. I won't quote it, as I have been accused of pedantry already, and the *Greek* mania perished with Byron; I will merely say I acted upon it,

and betook myself to my companions, and had a hearty supper at the Shirt and Shotbag, which I rectified with certain additional glasses, to give me courage to face Mrs. P. at a curtain lecture.

I must say, in a parenthesis, that I think Byron prigged the ideas from the passage alluded to above in his "Don Juan"—I mean in the letter of Donna Julia, where she says,

"Man may range," &c., &c.

I may be unjust in accusing the noble bard of borrowing; it may merely have occurred, as Puff says in "The Critic," that Euripides "happened to think of it" before his lordship.

Broome and Dusterly, who were accidentally at Mr. Rakestraw's—an accident, by the by, that befalls them every night—were surprised and confounded at the very odd and incorrect conduct of my old woman, and highly indignant at Nic's destroying the harmony of the family—meaning, I imagine, by destroying my flute.

"His is 'ead urt?" inquired the latter.

"Not much," I replied.

"Hah! hit's a family 'ead—rather thick, hi dare say. No arm's done, depend on't. Now

hi'll tell you ow hi huses *my* young uns when they offends me. Hif it's winter, I dips their airs in ha bucket of pump-water, and makes 'em stand in the hair till their airs his fruz as ard so has they can't drag a comb through 'em; and hif hit's summer, hi puts ha pound hof dripping hor lard into their ats, and stands 'em hin the sun till hits all run down hover their heyes and faces — that's what I calls fatherly correction, and breaking no bones."

Broome intimated that a well-seasoned ash stick was a more seize-on-able weapon at all seasons of the year; and Mr. Rakestraw, who had served in the waggon-train in the American war, was a strong advocate for the cat-o'-nine-tails, on the effects of which he speaks from experience.

"Bless my soul," exclaimed Broome, holding up the "Anti-present-state-of-things Gazette," a cheap paper that the landlord takes of one of his customers, who "takes it out" in gin: "Can this be true?"

"Wat his hit?" inquired Dusterly.

"We understand from private authority, on which we can depend, that the Honourable Mr.

Augustus Noodledoodle Nincompoop, late consul at the North Pole, is to succeed his noble and aristocratic father, Lord Nincompoop, Baron Fuddlehead, as first lord of the scullery and clerk of the kitchen-range. We fearlessly pronounce this to be a most infamous and disgusting appointment, and a piece of gross jobbing; as every body knows the honourable (?) gentleman has not one single qualification for those important places. It is doubtless convenient to him to have the range of the kitchen; but why should the public be taxed for it? We leave it to our contemporary, the Penny Advocate of Existing Abuses, to answer that question — *if it can.* ”

“Why,” said Dusterly, “that must be your hold master, Lord Nincompoop, of Christ Church; you made a good thing hout hof im, and hought to stand glasses round to drink is ealth hon is happoinment.”

The glasses were ordered, for Broome, in these matters, is “a Liberal,” and over them he told us a great many anecdotes of the honourable gentleman who was the object of the vitupee-

rations of the editor of the "Anti-present-state-of-things Gazette," which I shall publish, with his kind permission, under the title of

THE SCHOOL AND COLLEGE CAREER
OF THE HONOURABLE AUGUSTUS NOODLEDODDLE
NINCOMPOOP.

But before I begin, I must, in justice to my readers, explain the cause of Mrs. P.'s very extraordinary and unusual conduct.

When I left my friends, and the Shirt and Shotbag — which was not until Tom had tolled twelve — I felt firmer in my mind than in my body. I resolved, as I went zigzagging down the street (for, though I was sober enough myself, and saw single still, my knees were very drunk indeed) to go straight to the point at once with Mrs. P., and to have none of her nonsense. I found her in bed amusing herself with snoring and sobbing contemporaneously. I have a faint recollection of striking a light, and making a very excellent speech in favour of my marital right to be informed of the meaning of her un-wife-like behaviour, and of obtaining no other reply to it beyond a muttered,

“Drunken brute !”

I was determined to punish such rebellious conduct ; so I scrambled into bed and turned my back upon her without saying another word.

I dare say I fell asleep immediately, for a dozen glasses of grog, and a corresponding number of pipes, generally act as an opiate with me.

I don't know how long I was permitted to sleep, but I was aroused from a pleasant dream by Mrs. P.'s putting her arm round my neck, and giving me a hearty kiss, saying, at the same time, “ she was fully satisfied it was all false.”

I will not enter into all the particulars of the explanation that ensued, as, in these fastidious times, I might be unjustly accused of indelicacy. I need merely mention that Master Nicomedes, forgetful of the flavour of the gin-and-peppermint, and the promise he had made to Mr. Rakestraw, “ up and told” his mother all about my being an odd-fellow, giving her a glowing description of the cruelties inflicted on the brotherhood at their initiation ; and, amongst others, that we were all branded on the back with the letters O. F., a foot long and an inch deep.

The idea of my being branded like a felon, and with the letters O. F., which might justly have been interpreted "old fool," as well as odd fellow, had proved too much for the feelings of Mrs. P.

I need not say that the very first offence Master Nic committed after this indefensible disclosure of my belonging to a secret society, was visited with a double dose of the stick ; as he himself allowed, "he cotched it like winkin."

But enough of my domestic disarrangements. I will proceed at once with the history of the honourable gentleman who furnishes the subject matter of my tale.

The Fuddleheads, as the red book will show, are a very ancient and extensive family ; indeed I believe there are very few counties in which a specimen of the breed may not be found located. It will be necessary, however, to explain how and by what virtues one branch of the family was raised to the peerage by the expressive and appropriate title of Nincompoop, and why the subject of this memoir was chris-

tened Noodledoodle in addition to Augustus. This will require a short account of his progenitors.

The first of the family who acquired any celebrity was the grandfather of Augustus. His name was John Fuddlehead, though his neighbours and friends generally called him Jack, and to his face too. He dwelt in that corner of the county of Gloucester which is bounded on one side by the river Wye, and on the other by the forest of Dean. He cultivated a farm of his own, which was more celebrated for its extent, and the beauty of its wild mountainous scenery, than for its fertility ; indeed, beyond a few acres of scraggy-looking barley and stumpy oats, the whole crop consisted of flints and short grass, which would have puzzled any thing but a Welsh sheep, or a Welsh pony, to get a nibble at it. Of these agile and delicious-eating muttons Jack kept extensive flocks, by which, and a herd of some hundred ponies, he might have made a very good living had he not been too fond of society and strong ale.

As his farm at Stoneydown was some six

miles from any other habitation, and the roads that led to it were impracticable for any thing but a mountain pony, Jack could not see much company at home. The nearest town, which I shall call Boughtborough, was about ten miles distant, and thither Jack repaired every evening to enjoy his beer and a game at put, or all-fours, with three or four choice companions, who were as idle and dissipated as himself.

As long as his mother lived—for his father died ere Jack came of age—she managed to keep things pretty well at the farm; but when she died, and no one, but hired servants, was left to look after it, weeds grew where corn was wont to grow, and the sheep and ponies were carried off by persons who had no legal claim to them but that of possession.

Jack would inevitably have been ruined had he not fallen in love with and married one Miss Winifred Jones, of Llàhcynvarwydd, in North Wales, whom he discovered on one of his sheep-dealing excursions into those unknown regions. She proved a regular tartar, and kept Jack closely to his business and his home, and thus

saved the lands of Stoneydown from passing out of the hands of the Fuddleheads for ever.

Jack, however, was so far involved that he required a hundred pounds "to go on with," and fill up the number of his flocks. He accordingly, with his wife's permission, and strict orders to be home before dark, went over to Boughtborough, and called on the lawyer—for that town, in those happy days, had only one of the profession in it—and was very scurvily treated, and sent home without any money, and with a hint from Mr. Price that he must ride over to view the farm of Stoneydown before he advanced any money upon the writings of it.

Price kept his word, and was so far satisfied with what he saw, that he not only advanced the hundred pounds, but offered to purchase the land for about half its value. To this Mrs. Fuddlehead decidedly objected, and lawyer Price went on bidding, until he actually offered beyond the then real value; which, as she was a very shrewd woman, caused the lady to suspect that the lawyer had some very good

reasons for believing that more might be made by the land than it produced at present, in some way or other, and she was determined to keep it in her own possession.

Her suspicions were strengthened by the lawyer's coming over several times afterwards, and trying all his persuasive powers to induce Jack to sell; tempting him with offers which he would not have had philosophy enough to resist but for his wife's obstinacy, as he called it. The mystery, like all other mysteries, was solved at last. One day, as Jack was riding up the hills, to look after his brood mares, he was surprised to see three men, one of whom was lawyer Price, busily engaged in boring the side of the hill with an enormous iron gimlet. Jack jumped off his pony and walked quietly to the spot, which he reached just as one of the gentlemen pronounced a dark, reddish mass of stone, to be pure iron-ore. This was enough for Jack; for, stupid as he was in other respects, he was awake to his own interests. He rode home again, unseen by Price and his party, to tell his wife of his discovery, and had

not been at home above an hour before the lawyer called, and doubled the amount of his former bidding. Mrs. Fuddlehead called him by some actionable names, and threatened to turn him out of the house ; disclosing, too, her knowledge of the valuable contents of the hill, at which he was equally surprised and dismayed.

But to cut a long story short—in a few years the land of Stoneydown, whereon in former days stood the little farm-house, and whereon grazed the sheep and ponies, was covered with a noble mansion, furnaces, shafts, iron-works, and a large and populous village. The rental, too, on which Price had hesitated in advancing £100, was something like £100,000 per annum. Jack Fuddlehead was transferred into John Fuddlehead, Esq., and returned the two members for Boughtborough, by the advice and assistance of his solicitor and agent, Mr. Price, who was now his most obedient humble servant and factotum.

Jack's only son, after his father's death, which was hastened by the enormous quantity

of strong beer he drank, to console him for the loss of his wife, sold the property very advantageously to a company. He had been brought up at Westminster and Oxford, and had imbibed very aristocratic notions of the impropriety of trading pursuits, and the positive necessity of forming a noble alliance. This he effected by making successful overtures to a broken-down bit of blood, the Hon. Miss Theodosia Noodledoodle, of Nincompoop, in the county of Monmouth, who insisted upon his using his influence with the government, which was considerable, from his borough interest, to be raised to the peerage, under the title of Lord Nincompoop, Baron Fuddlehead. In this he succeeded, and with the help of his lady obtained the government appointments, the transmission of which to his son gave, as we have seen, such offence to the editor of the "Anti-present-state-of-things Gazette."

The Noodledoodles had a very large pedigree and a very small estate, on which stood a large house, which resembled the family pedigree in its antiquity and uselessness. It was almost a

ruin, and scarcely habitable. As the house at Stoneydown had been sold with the iron-mines to the company, and it was impossible for a lord to be without a country mansion, Lady Fuddlehead easily prevailed upon her noble husband to redeem the mortgaged lands of Nincompoop, and build a mansion thereon, more suited to the dignities to which he had been elevated than the old house, which, with very little trouble, indeed almost *sponte sua*, was pulled down, and sold for "old materials."

In the mean while, as builders who do not work by contract do not erect noblemen's seats very rapidly, and it was requisite that the newly-married pair should have some place to reside in, Lord Fuddlehead proposed hiring a mansion for a time. This did not exactly accord with the lady's views. She had heard much of the joys of London life—I don't mean "life in London"—but presentations at court—birthdays—drawing-rooms—opera-boxes—routs—drums—carriages—Hyde Park—morning calls, and shopping; and she had long "longed to follow to the town some warlike lord," or lady, and,

having now a lord of her own, was resolved to gratify her longing.

Lord Fuddlehead, anxious to renew his acquaintance with the honourables—his associates at Westminster and Oxford—readily agreed to purchase “an eligible and splendidly-furnished mansion in Park Lane, the property of a gentleman who had no further occasion for it,” and, as the “establishment,” servants, carriages, and horses, were equally as useless to the gentleman about to leave as the mansion itself, they were included as sundries in one lot, and knocked down to his lordship as the highest bidder, to the mutual satisfaction of all parties.

Here, speedily after her location, Lady Fuddlehead purchased popularity, by feeding and entertaining the aristocracy sumptuously nearly every day, and not wishing to become “a leader,” soon succeeded in playing a very respectable second fiddle on the stage of fashionable life.

Politics ran high in those days, and patriotism, in the modern acceptation of that abused word, was at a discount. To be “in place” was

considered respectable, and Lord Fuddlehead, by virtue of his two sure votes for Bought-borough in the lower, and his own as a peer in the upper house, obtained the valuable appointments of first lord of the royal scullery, and clerk of the kitchen range—the duties of which, it is generally supposed, are neither very laborious nor vexatious; it merely being required that the gentleman who holds them should attend the *levées*, with a very neat silver-gilt poker in his right hand, and a fine cambric dishcloth in his left, and sign a receipt quarterly for the amount of his salary; — the rest is done by deputy.

I regret that I cannot oblige Lord and Lady Fuddlehead by directing more of the public attention to them and their “sayings and doings,” but my business is with their son — their only son — Augustus, whose birth in Park Lane was announced in the fashionable chronicles of the day, in an appropriate and sesquipedalian paragraph; which afforded “the gentlemen of the press” a very suitable opportunity of filling up a considerable portion of their columns, by re-

counting the titles, dignities, and enormous properties in lands, funds, and other securities, to which the newly-born honourable babby was the heir, which, of course, were *not* paid for by his “as-well-as-could-be-expected” mamma, and his honourable and happy papa.

I shall pass over the days of his pap and puppyhood, merely observing that he cut his teeth very successfully under the well-fee’d hands of Sir Hippocrates Galen, and was baptized in a very handsome and enormous silver (punch)-bowl, by the Right Reverend, &c., &c., the Bishop of Blank ; several highly-respectable personages of both sexes becoming bail for his little peccadilloes, until time should render him old enough to take the responsibility of them upon himself.

The mansion at Nincompoop, which appeared *upon* the earth at the same time with the heir thereof, grew with his growth, and strengthened with his strength, and both were pronounced to be presentable to the public about the same time—namely, at the age of ten years. Much care had been bestowed upon the internal ar-

rangements, furnishing, and decorating of both—the stone and brick house being left to the superintendence of Messrs. France and Banting, and the fleshly mansion to the care of Mrs. Slushem the nurse, and Miss Emiline Trimmer, the nursery governess.

We must request the reader to be present at what is vulgarly called the “house-warming.”

It is September, and a large party is assembled of such fashionables as could be induced to travel so far—consisting principally of young men, who wage war with partridges; mammas, who wish those same young gentlemen to take aim at and bag some of their numerous undowered daughters, and a sprinkling of offshoots of noble families, who, having a name, but no local habitation, condescend to occupy a suite of apartments at a friend's, in preference to seeking for “lodgings to let,” or putting up with the expensive comforts of an inn.

Amongst these kind and condescending personages assembled at Nincompoop Hall, at the “opening dinner,” was one whom I must introduce to the reader, as she caused a great altera-

tion in the destinies — as far as the fate of his earlier years and education were concerned — of Mr. Augustus.

Lady Skinnykin Frostyface was a *vestale* of some forty-five winters' standing; well born, for she could boast of royal blood circulating through her veins; well educated, for she had been brought up in France; but very poor, and of course very proud. When Lady Fuddlehead appeared upon the scene of London life, Lady Skinnykin, knowing that she was the antipodes of herself, with regard to the goods of this world, wisely and benignantly resolved not to let the pride of high birth stand in the way of her sharing and partaking of the advantages which money always ensures. By public patronage, introductions to persons to whom she might, without such assistance, have found access difficult, the arrangement of her visiting-list, and the remodelling of her already perfect establishment, she rendered herself so necessary to Lady Fuddlehead, that that lady — with difficulty, of course—induced her to resign her *bijou* of a cottage at Kensington, and take up her residence

in a suite of rooms allotted to her in Park Lane.

Once established there, Lady Skinnykin made up her mind to remain with her "dear friend" for life, and accordingly commenced a series of operations, to render the citadel of her power impregnable. To effect this, she did not resort to the common arts of toadies and hangers-on, but boldly, as they say on the turf, "took the lead, and kept it," without letting her host and hostess perceive that they were under her rule and guidance. She managed so cleverly, that she made every plan she wished to be executed appear to be the suggestion of themselves; and as all those plans tended to their progress in good, *i. e.* high society, they thought themselves extremely clever people, and were perfectly satisfied.

For ten years she ruled with despotic power—for both Mrs. Slushem and Miss Trimmer were in her interest—which she had secured by acting as a spy upon them, and threatening to expose certain little undefinable acts of delinquency, of which servants will be guilty, even

in the best regulated families. Lady Fuddlehead was really attached to "her friend," though, in her heart, "her friend" envied and detested Lady Fuddlehead. The only reason she could assign to herself for these feelings was, that she was not Lady Fuddlehead herself. Not that she loved Lord Fuddlehead, but his money, — and the powers that money conferred.

She "rather loved" Augustus, if she could be said to love any thing but herself, because he was a trump card to play, in her game with his honourable father and mother; for every little attention she showed him, and every little present she made him, she knew would be repaid to her tenfold. The feeling was certainly not reciprocal, for Augustus hated her very cordially, and told Miss Trimmer, with a hard kick, confirmatory, on the shins, "that he would not be lugged into the old cat's room, to have his shoulders pulled out of their sockets, to make him upright; and his marbles taken away, because he should not play like the little dirty boys in the streets." This answer, how-

ever, did not affect her ladyship in the least ; she petted and provoked him, as if he liked it.

When the removal took place from London, to open the festivities at Nincompoop, of course Lady Skinnykin did not wait for an invite to join the party, but quietly arranged matters, so as to secure herself the best seat in the travelling carriage, and the most commodious apartment in the new house,—in which we will join her, and her ally, Mrs. Slushem, on the morning after the opening dinner, which it will be needless to describe, as every body can imagine the “triumphal arches,” charity children, strewing flowers in their patrons’ path ; the roasting of whole sheep and oxen ; the getting very tipsy on beer and spirits, in tents erected in the park, among the lower orders ; and “excited” by champagne and claret, amongst the higher rank of visitors ; the presentation of the heir “to the estates, and virtues” of his sire, to his future tenantry, all of whom pronounced him to be the very image of his father and mother, who were as unlike each other as a negro is to a Chinaman ; all this can be easily imagined ;

it is the *crambe repetita* of all country *fêtes*, given on marrying, coming of age, or committing any other kind of "family" foolery.

"Slushem," inquired Lady Skinnykin, fixing her spectacles on her sharp nose, a thing she never did except before her intimates, "who was that remarkably nice gentleman in black, who sat with Mr. Augustus on his knee, when you came to remove the young gentleman from the drawing-room?"

"Why, my leddy, I is not disactly made in-quainted of his precise sitivation in this here 'stablishment as yet; least ways, to the best of my belief, he's to be one of us; though for all, as he is to have a room to hisself, and not to have no vails or parkisits; but his wages is exillint—more nor Mr. Stickiton's, the house steward."

"Wages—perquisites—establishment—what can you mean?" said Lady Skinnykin. "I thought it was scme clerical connexion of the family—a dean or prebendary—or some other inferior order of the clergy."

"No, my leddy, no!" replied Slushem, try-

ing to look what she called "contemtious;" "he's only what Mr. Nutmegs, the butler, calls a cad to the recumbent of the parish."

"A curate! *Mon Dieu!!*" exclaimed her ladyship, taking off her spectacles, "is that all?"

"Not disactly, my leddy: he's been 'pinted as tootorer to Master Gussy."

"What?" inquired her ladyship, feeling at a nonplus.

"A tooturer—or a teacher—or a learner, for they're all as one—a chap as is to read prayers, and preach to the 'stablishment, write my lord's letters, read the noos out loud, and walk out with the little right honourable, when it's fine; and, if it powers o' rain, to play battledoor and shuttlecock with him in the libery."

"*Est-ce possible?* a private chaplain appointed without *my* advice being asked!" cried Lady Skinnykin, looking as horrified as if high treason had been committed. "Lady Fuddlehead *must* and *shall* account to me for this."

"If my 'pinion was arks'd," said Slushem, "I should say as her leddyship, my missus,

arn't in no ways consarned in the 'pintment whatsomdever. I heard my lord say, that as how Mr. Scanner was a young man as had got him a great-go at Oxford college, and as he had consikently collected him to put Mr. Augustus through his little-goes ; which, I supposes, means pegtops, hoops, and marvels, afore he learns to ride."

Lady Skinnykin, after dismissing Slushem, threw her shawl over her scraggy shoulders, and entered the boudoir of her friend and hostess, whom she found in company with Miss Trimmer, teaching her young hopeful (who was very sulky because he was not to be dressed in his best, and shown on the lawn to the tenantry, two days running,) how to play at scratch—or cat's-cradle. An intimation that she had something mysterious to impart to her dear friend, induced the nursery governess to retire with her promising pupil ; and Lady Skinnykin, upon explaining all she had heard about the tutor, was enraged to find that her "dear friend" had taken the important step of consenting to admit such an animal into the house without consulting *her*.

And why did she feel annoyed at so very common a proceeding, in most, or at least, many married families, who prefer private to public education? Simply because she dreaded, lest the eye of a third and disinterested party should detect the system of tyranny, or rather true despotism, that she exercised over the heads of the family of the Fuddleheads.

Her "dear friend" was quite amazed at the horror displayed by her ladyship at the idea of her son's not being sent to Eton, Charterhouse, Westminster, or some other public school, where he would have the advantages of an early insight into the world, and the chance of forming noble associations! A great deal was said on both sides upon the never-yet-settled question, the superiority of private over public, and public over private education, which ended in Lady Skinnykin promising to write to her brother, Lord Wastepaper, for an appointment to Rotherwick school; which, as it was founded especially for the sons of decayed merchants and tradesmen, was, of course, admirably suited for the heir-apparent to a peerage, and £100,000

per annum. Before an answer could be given to her application, her ladyship found that her plans were likely to be defeated by Lord Fuddlehead, who was fool enough to think that he was not justified in robbing some poor devil of a good education gratuitous, by accepting an appointment for his own son, whom he could well afford to educate at home, and provide for an old friend and private tutor into the bargain. All her ladyship's arguments went for nothing; and, as argument would not avail, she tried stratagem, in which she was more *au fait*.

Trimmer had formed a virtuous *liason* with the serjeant, who was engaged to teach Mr. Augustus his manual exercise—an educational excess committed universally in days of yore—and her secret had been accidentally discovered by Lady Skinnykin; whose ears were more frequently applied to keyholes, than to their natural and legitimate uses.

The possession of this secret enabled her ladyship, by threatening to tell her employers, and ruin her for life, to make poor Trimmer (who was merely waiting to make up a certain

sum sufficient to furnish a house for herself and the serjeant, her future husband,) do pretty much as she pleased. What she did insist upon her doing, and how it succeeded in aiding her ladyship's views, will be seen in the sequel.

"I am really surprised at your blindness, my dear Fuddlehead," said her ladyship, after a week's residence at Nincompoop; "is it that you *do* not see, or *will* not see?"

"See what?" cried her "dear friend."

"Why, what every one, with the minutest portion of penetration, *must* see — that Mr. Scanner is making the agreeable very violently to poor deluded Trimmer."

"Impossible! he's engaged, I assure you, in another quarter — to a highly-respectable, and rather superior young person — Miss Price, our *homme d'affaire's* daughter."

"Engaged or not, I will venture to predict that he is at this moment paying assiduous attentions to poor Emiline in the school-room. Come with me, and judge for yourself."

Lady Skinnykin did not "lead the way," but dragged her "dear friend" with her, by locking

her reluctant arm within her own ; and throwing open the door of the school-room, as the nursery was now called, discovered the Rev. Mr. Scanner holding Miss Trimmer, who was fainting, in his arms.

Lady Fuddlehead, without waiting for any explanation of the scene before her, but prematurely imagining an unpleasant *dénouement* of the drama or farce, rushed to her husband's room, and pronounced sentence of expulsion on the reverend gentleman, and that too without any time or warning being given him.

His lordship, urged by his wife, and worried by her "dear friend," was obliged to comply, and poor Scanner was dismissed with a check for £500, secretly bestowed by his patron ; and Miss Emiline Trimmer, with her arrears of wages, and a £50 note, from Lady Skinnykin.

The former did *not* marry Miss Price—who would not hear any thing which he might have to say in his defence—until Miss Trimmer had become the lawful and wedded wife of Serjeant Shanks, of the Guards ; after which event, she gave Miss Price, in a general poster, a full and

particular account of the way in which she had been induced, by the threats and promises of Lady Skinnykin, to invite Mr. Scanner into the nursery, under the pretence of asking him some grammatical question, and pretending to faint, just as she heard her ladyship's "hem!" upon the staircase.

Lord Wastepaper had fortunately a vacancy, and sent the appointment, under cover, to his sister, who made a very long speech about her delight at being able to recompense her "dear friends," in some slight degree, for the numerous favours, &c. &c. &c.—which may be summed up in one word—humbug!

The school of Rotherwick, so called—for I like to be particular—from the word *rother*, which means cattle of some kind or other, and *vicus*, a village, probably derived its name from its proximity to a large cattle-market, like Southall or Islington. It was founded by a private gentleman, who had amassed an enormous property, (and who had no family to inherit it) for the benefit of the sons of decayed tradesmen. The foundation-boys, to the number of

fifty, were educated, clothed, and fed at school, for some seven or eight years, and then either apprenticed at the school's expense, or sent to Oxford or Cambridge, with good exhibitions or scholarships. But, besides these fifty collegers, there were some four hundred boarders and town boys, who had the same education as the others, but had to pay pretty handsomely for it; but the honour of being a Rotherwickian was well worth all the money, as, instead of poor broken-down tradesmen's sons, the appointments were generally conferred upon the junior branches of noble and distinguished families, intended for the liberal professions.

The trustees, or governors, as they are called, might be blamed by some unthinking persons for thus defeating the intentions of the founder; but, upon due consideration, they ought not to be blamed for securing some recompense to themselves, or their families, for the inconveniences arising from the trusteeship. They were sometimes obliged to meet for two hours' business, *twice* in the year, and then to sign their names to the already audited accounts, be-

sides writing out an appointment, when it came to their turn to fill up a vacancy.

Armed with the appointment signed by Lord Wastepaper, the Honourable Augustus, and his noble *père*, proceeded in the carriage and four, with outriders, to Rotherwick, which was, and still is, I believe, in the neighbourhood of London. The boy, who had no conception of the miseries in store for him, was delighted at the thoughts of having companions of his own age and rank to play with, and had a notion that he should make an enormous impression upon their youthful minds, by the display of ten golden guineas—his first *tip*—and the exceedingly elegant cut of his blue jacket and trousers, covered with brass basket-buttons, and covering limbs, which resembled a young calf's—being all knees and elbows. Lord Fuddlehead gave him some judicious advice, about spending his money like a gentleman, and associating with no boy below himself in rank, and being particular in his dress and manners. As to his moral conduct, he left that entirely to the masters, who were paid to look after such matters.

When the carriage and four, with its outriders, servants, &c., drove into the college-yard, the windows—as they say of the yards of a man-of-war—were “manned” by the boys who were staring in admiration at the turn-out, and burning with curiosity to know who the fresh arrival could be. A few trifling bets of a sovereign or two were laid upon the rank indicated by the coronet on the panels, and the long odds were offered and taken, that the “little kivey” in the blue and bright buttons had not one of those bright buttons left on his blues by eight o’clock the next morning. Strong hopes were expressed by some of the little ones, that the new boy had not had the measles, hooping-cough, or scarlet-fever, but would be laid up with one or other of those infectious disorders very soon, that they might catch it of him, and be sent home to their friends.

As soon as the “governor and his brat” had been admitted to the head-master’s, one of the servants was called to the windows by several voices, and interrogated thus:—

“You, sir! in the rhubarbs and yellows—come hither! Who’s your master?”

John hesitated.

“Why don’t you answer? you long-legged lout! I wish I was outside these bars, I’d darken your daylights, and knock your ivory cribbage-pegs down your throat. Who’s your master?”

Two or three books, a slate, and sundry knobs of coal, were converted into missiles, which induced John to tell the boys the name, rank, and residence, property, and qualities of his master, and he doubtless would have exceeded the truth to raise his own importance in the eyes of his young master’s future companions, had not the opening of a door leading from the head-master’s caused his auditors to disappear suddenly and simultaneously.

The carriage drove off just as Dr. Worthy, the head-master, entered the hall, and, summoning the senior monitor, introduced Augustus to him, simply as Master Nincompoop, and ordered him to place him under some master’s care, and to see him furnished with desk and bookcase. The doctor, though very much beloved by all his pupils, was a very severe man; and, although

the announcement of the new boy's name "titillated their risibles," none of the boys ventured to laugh until he had quitted the hall. Then the under-boys began to grin and laugh out loud at little "Ninny," as he was called from that day forth, but were ordered to their places by the monitor, who, with the upper-boys, wished to satisfy his curiosity first.

"Come hither, my little kivey! How's your mother?"

"Pretty well, thank ye," replied Augustus, "'septing a little running at the nose from a cold."

"Well, never descend to particulars. What's your name? — how old are you? — who's your father? — how much money have you got? — where do you live when you're at home?"

Augustus gave a full, true, and particular answer to all these questions, which elicited sundry winks, shrugs, and grins from his hearers.

"I know all about him," said the Hon. Peregrine Tittleback, who was the walking red-book of the school, "his grandsire was a mechanic, who found metal, and converted iron into pewter.

His sire is Lord Fuddlehead, a mere *parvenu*, a *novus homo*, who holds some low place about court, and his dam was a Noodledoodle, one of a damaged family in Monmouthshire."

This announcement, which was fully credited—for Tittleback was an indisputable authority in pedigree matters, lowered Augustus several notches in the estimation of his schoolfellows, and one or two in his own—for he had fancied that the bare announcement of his name and future titles and estates would produce an awful sensation.

"Who wants a fag?"

"I do—it's my turn—I've only got two," replied a boy of the fifth form, who was called Black Jack, which was short for Blackguard Jackson—a title he had justly earned by his low, sneaking conduct—which will be displayed in his behaviour to his fag.

"Then take Ninny, there," said the senior monitor; "and don't bully him to death—if you do I'll lick you, if no one else will."

Jack looked savage, but, like all bullies, he was a great coward at heart, and made no reply,

but took Ninny up to his study, and addressed him thus :—

“You little honourable little vagabond, I’ll lower your conceit for you in a very few days. Take that vessel of paper and that pen, and write down your list of necessities :—1 clothes-brush, 2 hair ditto, 1 tooth ditto, 1 large-tooth comb, 1 small-tooth ditto, 1 brush, 1 nail-brush, 1 square of soap, 1 pen-knife, 1 hack ditto, 1 frying-pan, 1 gridiron, 6 table-knives and forks, 1 kettle, 1 saucepan, 1 washing-basin, and 1 water-jug, 1 set of shoe-brushes, and a bath-brick.”

Ninny wrote out the list, wondering what he could possibly have to do with several of the articles, but more especially the shoe-brushes, and the bath-brick.

“Now, how much coin have you got?” continued Jack.

“Ten golden guineas !” said Ninny, *ore rotundo*, and a magnificent look.

“Is that all ?” inquired his master, contemptuously, “hand them out.”

Ninny produced a very neat green silk purse,

the workmanship of his fond mother, and Black Jack threw it, with its contents, into his desk, saying,

“I’ll take care of it for you — but when I’ve paid for your necessities, and your subscription to the library, cricket-club, and tennis-court — I’m afraid you’ll be obliged to tick for a hocky-stick and a hoop — I don’t allow my fags to eat cakes—they stuff and get lazy.”

“But my father said,” observed Ninny, with the tears trickling down his fair cheeks, and his heart, as they sometimes say, up in his mouth, “that I was to keep my own money my own self.”

“I tell you what, you little wretch,” said his master, pulling half a handful of his curly hair out by the roots, “if ever you allude to the governor again, or blubber in my presence, I’ll show you up, and have you well flogged first, and rub you down with salt myself afterwards.”

Poor little Ninny felt at that moment as if he should feel particularly obliged to any gentleman who would cut his throat, or administer a dose of prussic acid, and put him out of the way of the miseries *in prospectu*.

“ Now, sir, take the pen again, and write down your duties as my fag.”

Ninny did take the pen, though he could scarcely hold it; his hand trembled so much, and for some seconds the paper was invisible to him, from the tears, which, in spite of his efforts to restrain them, gushed from his eyes.

Black Jack took no notice of this, but went on very coolly : — “ At five o’clock (it was the depth of winter) you’ll get up, go down to the pump, and fill my ewer and kettle, and put the kettle on to boil; clean my shoes, and your own; brush the clothes; clean the knives and forks, and get my breakfast ready; tea, and lots of toast. Then, after breakfast, wash up the things, and put them away; dry my towel, wash my gloves and hair-brushes; scour the kettles — if you have no sand, you must ‘tib out’ for some, and mind you ain’t caught at it, or you’ll be flogged; then get your lessons, and go into school; after school, come and see what I want; and after afternoon school, get dinner and have your frying-pan and gridiron ready to cook extras, and mind you crib a double share

of potatoes from the kitchen ; wait on me at dinner, and what's left you may eat yourself. After dinner, clean up, put candles in my study, and get boiling water and every requisite for tea ; after that you'll only have to clean up every thing, ' tib out' for sausages and liquors ; make punch, fry the sausages, clean the frying-pan, do your exercise, learn your repetition, and go to bed—after you have warmed mine by lying in it one hour."

Ninny was too much astounded to speak—he stared with astonishment to think that he, whose every want and wish had been anticipated, and who had never done the slightest thing for himself, should be compelled to do what his father's footman would have disdained to do ! He made up his mind to complain to Dr. Worthy — but, upon consulting with some of the under boys (who, after teasing and quizzing him a little, were tolerably kind to him), found that such a course would only subject him to rougher usage, as it was " the custom" of the school, and the upper forms were jealous of their " privileges." " Besides," said a little

urchin, about his own age, "it's only for three or four years, and then I shall have a fag of my own, and won't I lick him, that's all? It's all nothing when you're used to it, and if you don't mind chapped hands, and can *crib* well—you'll get lots of 'tucks out' for yourself—I do at least."

Supper-time arrived, and Ninny was pleased to see a pewter plate, with a large piece of bread and a slice of cheese set before him, and, as soon as Latin grace was over, was going to commence operations, for he was very hungry, when his little friend, Oxtowne, the lad that was anticipating the pleasure of licking his fag in a few years' time, informed him he must take it up to the high-table, to his master, *and if any was left*, after it was toasted, he might have it, "only when you get your hack-knife," he added, in a whisper, "you can cut a bit off as you go up in the crowd. See here—I've got a slice," and he showed a corner crust, which he slipped into his gown-sleeve pocket. Ninny got two crusts and a rind of cheese, as his share of the leavings, but being a new boy, a subscription was made

for him by his fellow fags, and he got enough to satisfy his hunger.

After supper, prayers were read, and the under boys sent to bed, though they did not want much sending, as the night was the only period that relieved them from the tyranny and oppression of their masters. I do not mean their *school*-masters, but their fagging masters.

Poor Ninny found himself in a long dormitory, with single stump-bedsteads, for twenty-five or thirty, ranged on each side of it, like those in soldiers' barracks, with a coarse but comfortable horsecloth upon each, in place of a counterpane. In the middle of the floor of the dormitory was placed a solitary dip-candle, by the light of which the boys had to scramble into bed in one minute—the exact time allowed by the monitor whose duty it was to see them in bed, and the candle removed.

Ninny managed to strip somehow, but, when he attempted to get into bed in the dark, was surprised to find that he could not get his feet lower than about half a yard. He was very much puzzled, and began to fancy that the bed

was too small for him, when he heard a general titter, which expanded *gradatim* into a loud laugh, and little Oxtowne, who slept next to him, told him, in a whisper, “it was only an apple-pie.” Ninny was as wise as ever, but his new ally stepped out of bed, and put it right for him, in a few minutes, in spite of the shoes that were hurled at his head from all quarters of the room.

After a great many stories had been told, about what they had done in the holidays at home—long descriptions given of new ponies, saddles, whips, boots, and other matters in which schoolboys delight—silence ensued; broken only by the light breathings, or murmured whisperings of the little sleepers; and, oh that night!—the silence of that night to poor Augustus! He lay, worn out and fatigued by his journey, his limbs were wearied, and he could not resist closing his eyes, yet he could not sleep—he felt as though his heart would break, and a sensation as of choking rose in his throat. He thought of his home—his indulgent father—his kind, his much-loved mother. He

felt in their fullest force all the kindnesses and attentions that had been lavished upon him by every one—even the lowest menial in his father's house—and now how gladly would he have changed situations with him, to see even those dear faces that he had left behind. And where was he now? Lying in a bed inferior to the lowest servant's at his home, a stranger amidst strangers—weak and delicate, and yet exposed to the merciless power of boys who cared not for his sufferings, provided their fancied wants were all supplied; and who seemed to have forgotten that they had ever been subjected to the same treatment themselves.

Oh! that night!—that miserable night!—he resolved to write to his parents on the following day, and entreat them to remove him at once from a place wherein he expected only misery, and he made up his mind, if his request was refused, to run away, and seek upon the sea an escape from the only ills he had as yet experienced.

Sleep, however, at last came to shed its healing balsam on his wounded spirit. His sobs

arose less frequently, and at length ceased entirely. But though the body was at rest, the mind was still active. He dreamed. He was in his father's halls—well-known, long-remembered faces met his view, and gazed on him with looks of affection and kindness—the very dogs seemed to look at him as though they loved him. Then there were his favourite toys—his arrows and his crossbow—the ship which he had rigged himself, and been so proud of, all were there. His mother, too, and his father, stood there viewing his skill with fond admiration, and showing their approval by the fond caress. His nurse, and even Lady Skinnykin, whose hitherto detested endearments he had avoided, now seemed objects worthy of his warmest greetings. Then the table, the well-known table, appeared before him, covered with the choicest wines, the daintiest fruits and sweetmeats—oh ! how they relished ! surely they had never tasted so sweet, so good before !

With the changeable nature of a dream, these pleasing visions fled, and in their place appeared the scenes he had viewed during this, his first

day of "life in a public school." He was again before a hundred strange, inquisitive, malicious-looking little eyes — again was he questioned, laughed and sneered at — again was he in his master's study, his money taken from him, and his hair pulled from his head by the roots. Again—but fortunately he was roused from his feverish sleep by Black Jack, who, taking the bolster from under his head, and shaking the feathers all into one end, very scientifically, proceeded to thrash him severely with it for forgetting to warm his bed.

"Jump up, you little varmint; cut *down* stairs, into the *upper* dormitory, find out my bed, and lie there till I come and relieve you."

Ninny sprung out, and was no sooner on his feet than he was "cut off" them again by a well-directed blow of the bolster, just below the knee.

Little Oxtowne grumbled, "Shame!" for which he got a bolstering, which lasted until his tormentor was obliged to cease for want of breath; and the noise of his victim's screams brought up the monitor, who happened to be the

pedigree-keeper, Mr. Tittleback, and hated black Jack as much as one boy could hate another — whose father's name was not in the red book, at least not the same name as his son's — who derived his from his mother, for reasons that may better be conceived than explained.

Tittleback demanded the meaning of the disturbance, to which Mr. Jack made no other reply, but a contemptuous grin and a shake of the bolster.

Little Oxtowne told the monitor, at his request, all the circumstances, and how Jack had taken all Ninny's money from him, and was going to make a warming-pan of him the *first* night, which was against the rules.

Upon inquiring into the truth of the money part of the story, and finding it perfectly correct, Tittleback summoned a *concio* of the fifth and sixth, and it was agreed *nem. con.* that Black Jack had been guilty of dirty, sneaking, and mean conduct, which required and called for a severe cobbing. This was accordingly inflicted immediately *à la* Lynch, and the culprit retired to his bed (unaired) with his body covered

with the marks of ashen sticks, and his mind full of schemes of vengeance on the innocent head of the poor Honourable Augustus Noodledoodle Nincompoop.

How he executed them will be seen hereafter.

CHAPTER XI.

LONG before the dawn, the Hon. Augustus was roused from his sleep by the man whose duty it was to call the boys in the morning, supply them with a dip to get up by, light the hall-fire, and manufacture the birch-rods. Practice makes perfect, and Manning—for so this official was named—prided himself on the perfection to which he had brought the building of birches.

“Here’s a rail beauty!” he would exclaim, eyeing one of his own productions with a scientific look, “jist try the handle on him — firm but springy—spreads out like a fantailed pigeon—beautiful, isn’t it? I’ll pound him to draw blood first cut.”

These observations were mercilessly made to the individual who was about to expiate some

offence upon "the block," as the flogging-stool was called, and made him feel remarkably comfortable, of course.

But to return to our hero; he got up and dressed himself as quickly as possible, and, under the guidance of his friend Oxtowne, proceeded to execute the duties required of him as a fag. The ewer and kettle were easily filled, considering the darkness of the morning, but the shoes, and knives and forks, required more skill in polishing than Ninny was possessed of; and he was obliged to appeal to his friends for their assistance. This they would readily have granted had not their own work prevented them, for each had quite as much to do as he could manage, before his master got up. Ninny, therefore, was forced to do as well as he could by imitating the others, and contrived to knock the skin off his knuckles without producing any thing like a polish on the shoes, and to run the prongs of the forks into his fingers, in his clumsy attempts to remove the grease and dirt. The pain, though severe, might not have produced tears, had it not been for the comforting remark

of Oxtowne, who, after inspecting his work, observed,

“You call that a polish, do you? I would not be in your place — that’s all. Black Jack will half murder you.”

“I *can’t* do them any better,” cried Ninny, the tears, which he could no longer control, streaming from his eyes.

“We never have the *can’t*s here, and so you’ll find before long,” said his friend. “But it’s of no use to stand there blubbering, it only wants ten minutes to seven, and you must call your master, as we go in directly the clock strikes.—I’m off, so come along.”

He wiped away his tears, forgetting that the hands which were employed in that operation were covered with blacking and blood, a considerable portion of which was transferred to his face, and gave him the appearance of a half-washed chimneysweeper. In this trim he proceeded to the dormitory, and in fear and trembling, shook his master’s shoulder to rouse him from his slumbers.

“What o’clock is it, you honourable little vagabond?” inquired Black Jack.

"Nearly seven, I believe," answered Ninny.

"You *believe*, sirrah ! What do you mean by that ? Have not you got a watch ?"

Ninny replied, by pulling out of his fob a very handsome gold hunting-watch, which his father, by the advice of Lady Skinnykin, had purchased for him a few days before.

"Just five minutes to seven," said his master, snatching the watch from him, and throwing it at his head. He avoided the blow by what is called *ducking*, and the watch flew down the dormitory, and was broken into fragments at the further end of the room.

This, of course, caused a considerable degree of uneasiness in the mind of its owner, as the possession of a watch is looked upon by puerilities as the first approach to manhood—at least a watch that will *go*—which this did, a great deal further than its maker ever intended.

"I'll write home to my father," cried Ninny, "and tell him about your behaviour."

"Oh, you will ! will you ?" said his master. "Now I'll give you a bit of advice—never open your mouth, except when you are at meals.

Now pick up the pieces of your timekeeper, and give me my shoes."

Ninny executed the first order very willingly, but felt somewhat backward in obeying the second, inasmuch as the shine was not such as to merit the wearer's approbation; the shoes, however, were produced, and the moment the "dullness of their lustre" met the master's eye, he shied both of them deliberately at the bearer's head, and jumping up, seized a towel, and dipped one corner of it into a basin of water, and then, giving it a scientific twist or two, brought it into the form of a solid ropeyarn, and telling Ninny to pull up his trousers at the bottom, so as to expose the calf, "flicked it into him," until he drew blood.

This novel mode of punishment produced extraordinary samples of activity in the operatee; for he jumped up from the floor, at every cut, higher than he himself thought possible, and the roars elicited might have been envied by the strongest bull in the neighbouring market.

"Now, you honourable little vagabond, how is it that your face is so detestably dirty? I'll show you up for being filthy."

“ I cut—cut—cut my hands, in trying to clean the knives and forks, and knocked the skin off my knuckles in trying to clean the shoes ; and then I cried, and then I wiped off the tears with my dirty hands.”

“ Ah, that’s all very well—I shall show you up for dirtiness,” answered his master ; “ give me a slip of paper.”

Now Ninny had no paper, because his boxes were all at the matron’s ; but he told his friend Oxtowne of his difficulties, who relieved them by tearing out the blank leaf of the first new book he met with, which Ninny bore, in triumph, to his tormentor.

“ Now, sir, write down, while I dictate — ‘ A. N. Nincompoop, for being dirty,’ and wash your face if you dare.”

Ninny complied, and with this document his master, after receiving the books he wanted, repaired to the school-room, and waited at the door, until the cries of “ All in—all in,” brought out Dr. Worthy, the head-master, to whom the show-up was handed ; and as soon as prayers were over, Ninny was called up, amongst the

other fifty or sixty shown-ups, to put in his defence to the action brought against him.

"Plead your first offence," whispered Oxtowne.

"How am I to do it?" inquired Ninny.

"Oh! merely say, 'first fault.'"

"First fault!" screamed out the poor boy, at the top of his voice, which elicited a roar from all the other boys.

"Who's that?" replied the doctor, waiting, to the annoyance of the seventeenth or eighteenth culprit, between the second and third cut.

"Me, sir," said Ninny.

"Who is that ungrammatical delinquent?" inquired Dr. Worthy, of one of the undermasters.

"A new boy. I don't know him," was the reply.

"Come hither, sirrah! Who are you?"

"The Honourable Au—Aug—gust—ust—us Nood—Noodle—oodle—doodle Nin—in—com—poop."

"Be concise, sir, and confine yourself to the

ultimate of your nomenclature in future. For what are you shown up?"

"Noth—noth—nothing, Mr. Doctor."

"Let me see the list," said the doctor to the monitor, who had the boy's head, who was undergoing his punishment on the block, between his legs.

"Ah! I see. For being dirty. A very serious offence,—but as it's your first fault you are excused. Return to your seat, and remember that any inattention to personal purification, in future, will be visited with due severity."

No criminal ever received a reprieve with greater joy than did poor Ninny, whose nerves were sadly unstrung by seeing the punishment of birching inflicted on those who had been "shown up" with himself, but who, as soon as it was over, returned to their places, and gave the piece of Indian-rubber, or the leaden bullet, which was used to bite at, to prevent their crying out, to the next floggee, as coolly as if nothing had happened.

To recount the miseries to which Ninny was subjected, through the tyranny of his master,

for the first week, would be impossible. So wretched was he, that he got up one morning, and resolved to run away. All his money was gone, and he had on the school-dress, which was, most probably, invented with the same object as the prison dresses are now—to prevent the escape of the wearer by its peculiar appearance. In our gaols the dress is generally a motley of yellow and blue, but at Rotherwick it consisted of a sort of groom's dress, of coarse black "knees," and a jacket of the same, over which, in school-hours, a gown was worn, something like a B.A.'s at Oxford, only made up of coarse cloth. The legs being exposed, without any other covering than a pair of cotton or worsted stockings, were generally protected by what were called "footballs;" that is, a pair of ribbed men's worsted hose, with the feet cut off, and confined under the shoe by a strap like a gaiter, reaching halfway up the thigh. In this dress, and an old hat of Manning's, which he cribbed out of the beer-cellar, and made to fit his little head by sticking his pocket-handkerchief on his forehead, Ninny ran off to the

nearest coachstand, and calling a jarvey, requested him to give him a "long shilling's-worth towards North Wales," much to the amusement of the waterman, who, recognising the livery of Rotherwick, seized the runaway by the collar, and conveyed him, in spite of his energetic kickings and strugglings, back again to school, for which he got half-a-crown from the master, and a good ducking, under a powerful two-handed pump, from the boys.

"Ninny was, of course, soundly flogged for attempting to escape, much to the delight of Black Jack, his master, who resolved to render him, if possible, more miserable than he was before.

Ninny unfortunately betrayed a talent for singing, and one of the new tortures put into practice against him was making him get upon one hob of the large hall-fire and sing duets with any other unlucky vocalist who happened to be at hand, from amidst the smoke and soot which was made to descend upon them by shouting loudly up the chimney. The next day he was invariably shown up, and as invariably flogged,

for "a want of attention to his personal purifications."

Another pleasant occupation was having to jump two or three feet from the ground, and then to be knocked down by his master, who stood upon a form for the purpose. This was called "tipping a neat swinger," and was a fashionable amusement with the bullies of the day.

But the most annoying employment of all was the being obliged to clean the cooking apparatus. This was a very simple one, consisting merely of a washhand-basin and a fork. It was used in this way: Sausages were the favourite dish for supper with the Rotherwickians. A string of these was suspended from the fork before the hall-fire, and the fat which oozed out in the process of roasting them was caught on a toast, which was placed for that purpose in the bottom of the basin, which did duty as dripping-pan. These were exceedingly good, and very much relished, but they left an incrustation on the basin, which was to return to its legitimate use on the following morning, that caused a great deal of

trouble and inconvenience to the fags. To remove the mass of burnt grease with cold pump-water only was impossible ; and if a speck was left upon the basin, a severe thrashing was the consequence. When sausages were “ in,” chapped hands were plentiful — indeed you could always tell the sausage season by inspecting the hands of the juniors, because the only means of removing the grease was by plucking up a turf or root of grass, with the dirt adhering to it, and scrubbing away in the cold water with it for half an hour.

One day, after he had been at school for about a month, and had written home several doleful epistles to his father, all of which, by the advice of Lady Skinnykin, had been kept from Lady Fuddlehead, and taken no notice of whatever, Ninny was surprised and delighted at the receipt of a large basket. The contents were an exceedingly nice cake from Mrs. Slushem, a bottle of wine from Mr. Nutmegs, the butler, and a letter with a “ tip,” from Lord Fuddlehead, telling him to send or carry a hare and two brace of woodcocks, which were packed in the bottom

of the basket, to Dr. Worthy, with his lordship's compliments.

These presents, however, never reached the doctor; for Black Jack, after taking away the cake and borrowing the "tip," announced his intention of giving a "tuck" with the game. Of course, Ninny dared not expostulate; such a proceeding would not only have been a work of supererogation, but of positive danger. He was ordered to "tib out down the lane" to the Red Cow, and get a bottle of gin, another of brandy, and to borrow something wherewith to stuff the hare. This was a work of danger, because if he were caught "tibbing out," a flogging was the certain result; but the bringing of spirits into Rotherwick, if discovered, would have caused his expulsion from the school. Practice, as I said before, makes perfect, and the little Rotherwickians knew the exact moment to run down to the Red Cow, and get in again through the gates without being seen, except by the porter, who knew it was as much as his life was worth to *split*.

The expedition proved successful, with the

exception of procuring the stuffing for the hare. Difficulties of that sort, however, are easily got over where the parties are not over-particular. A little bread and butter, which had been prigged at supper-time, were used as substitutes ; the skinning of the animal was a work of time, but was accomplished at last as well as could be expected. As to trussing it, that was quite out of the question, as no skewers were to be had. It was accordingly suspended before the fire, at full length from *the* fork, with its interior crammed with bread and butter ; and Ninny had to baste it with a pat of butter which he had concealed in his gown-sleeve pocket. The early part of this basting went on pretty well, but the fire which roasted the hare melted the butter in the pocket, and spoiled the process and the sleeve, for which Ninny got what his master termed “a good licking.”

Though the hare looked very much like a cat or a greyhound-puppy, the perfume from it was such as to establish a belief in the expectants that it would prove remarkably good in the eating. To test it, Mr. Peregrine Tittleback took

out his hack-knife and cut a slice from the back, pronouncing it to be "uncommon excellent." His example was, of course, followed, and the hare would have disappeared piecemeal without being dished up, had not the fall of the library-ladder, which had been set up as an alarm against Dr. Worthy's private door, given notice of his approach. The string was immediately cut, and the half-roasted animal thrown under the grate, and covered over with ashes and cinders. The fork was abstracted and pocketed, and, upon the doctor's entrance, every boy was in his seat, and no signs of illicit cooking visible.

The smell, which was rather powerful, would have excited suspicion in any other individual but the doctor, whose nose, from indulging in copious and frequent pinches of snuff, was more ornamental than useful. After he had called over names and sent the juniors to bed, he returned to his house, and the hare was dug out of the cinders, and, after being carefully washed in a toe-tub and scraped with a knife, was hung up again, and, when roasted, eaten with a great relish. The woodcocks were then substituted,

the potatoes fried in the fire-shovel, which had been previously cleaned out with a nail-brush, and a most excellent supper was made, and washed down with several *bowls* of punch, which bowls were nothing but washing-basins.

The relics of the tuck, consisting principally of bones closely picked, were kindly given to Ninny, who, like a fool or a new boy, which is much the same thing, carried them into his dormitory, intending to eat them in bed ; but in less than half a minute, a general rush took place, and a general scramble, which left him without even a taste of his honourable father's present.

This little treat suggested to the under-boys the necessity and propriety of having a tuck themselves. In the stableyard of Rotherwick, the groom kept a few dingy-looking draggletailed hens and ducks. Oxtowne undertook to steal and prepare a couple of each of these, and get them cooked at the Red Cow. He watched the groom out to exercise, and then, after a long chase round the yard, succeeded in knocking four on the head with a hocky-stick. He tied

them with his handkerchief round his waist behind him, and, putting his gown over them, got them safely to the Red Cow.

At nine at night, after prayers, they were handed in one by one through the bars of the window, with sundry pots of porter, and carried up to the dormitory. Unfortunately, Black Jack went up to give his fag his nightly bolstering, just as a bedstead was being converted into the supper-table, with a dirty sheet spread upon it for a cloth. This was enough to convince him that a tuck was going on, though he could not see the dishes, for the boys had jumped into bed and hidden them under the clothes. A discovery was made, in consequence of Oxtowne's having put one of the redhot ducks into Ninny's bed, and scalding him so severely, that he screamed out and threw the offending scavenger on the floor. Information was given to the upper-boys—the provisions were all seized, and, after the culprits had been punished by a general bolstering, eaten by the monitors, who showed their gratitude for the treat, by showing up the boys in the morning, and having them flogged for “tibbing out down the lane.”

I will not dwell longer on the various scrapes and difficulties into which the innocence and ignorance — *freshness*, as we term those combined qualities at Oxford — led Augustus; nor need I further explain the excellency of the educational system pursued at Rotherwick, for enlarging the mind in the sciences of cookery and shoe-blackery; suffice it to say, that, by the end of the first “half,” he made considerable progress in those necessary arts, which, excepting at Rotherwick and other public schools, are generally profitably pursued by individuals beneath the grade of gentlemen. As to his progress in learning, let that pass for the present *sub silentio*, as his studies had as yet been prudently confined to the rudiments of the Eton grammar. How he had improved in manners and morality, will be best shown by giving an account of what occurred at the mansion of Lord Wastepaper, his patron, on the first day of his first holidays.

His lordship was a great man in his way, and his greatness never developed itself so greatly as it did when he attended on “governors’ day,” as one of the trustees of Rotherwick. Upon

that "great important day" he made a point of displaying all the ribbons and stars which he was entitled to wear, in order to astonish all the little gown-boys who were drawn up at the entrance of the governors'-room, for the purpose of welcoming their patrons, and asking for a holiday, and who, having strong notions of what aristocracy meant, despised every body below a duke and a prime minister.

When, therefore, Lord Wastepaper descended from his carriage in all his glories of full dress and orders, he was highly gratified by hearing the little boys exclaim, "A holiday, *your grace!* — a holiday, *your grace!* and, in the plentitude of his delight, grasped his little *protégé* Ninny—taking care to give him his title at full length—by the hand, and insisted on his passing one day with him before he went down into Wales. One minute later, and the invitation would not have been given; as, before his lordship got many paces along the line, he heard Mr. Peregrine Tittleback promise Ninny and his friends "a —— good licking for calling that absurd little, over-

dressed individual, *his grace*, when they ought to have known that he was *only a viscount*."

I must observe, parenthetically, that, as soon as all the noble governors were safely ensconced in their room, and busied in forming plans for the better instruction and moral improvement of the youths, those youths were endeavouring to improve themselves by learning to drive the governors' carriages round an adjoining square, and treating the coachmen and flunkies to pots of porter at the Red Cow; of course, reserving to themselves the honour of "taking the head off" each pot, as the first *swig* was classically termed. The result, as may be expected, was, that the speed of the horses which drew the respective turns-out was tried, and a proper emulation excited, which terminated in "shocking accidents," such as broken-knees, smashed panels, and a "distressing state of the poles."

But to proceed — the holidays arrived, and Ninny, laying aside the school-dress, resumed with joy his "home clothes," the afore-mentioned blues, with yellow basket-buttons, which had been furbished up to last him till he got

home ; though he had grown so much in the six months, that they did not fit him enough, and left his wrists and ankles inelegantly exposed to the gaze of the passers-by. He was not so much annoyed by the passengers as he might have been, had it been later in the day ; for his impatience to leave Rotherwick had induced him to get up at four o'clock in the morning, and to present himself at Lord Wastepaper's door, in the fashionable and lazy quarters of Grosvenor Square, before the neighbouring clocks struck five, which they all made a point of doing within a quarter of an hour of each other after his arrival. This interval he occupied in standing on tiptoe, and knocking as well as he could to gain admission ; but, finding that Grosvenorian domestics were not inclined to prove the truth of the scriptural assertion, he proceeded to try the advantage of the " knock and ring " system, which he had seen strongly recommended on some of the doors as he passed along. The first pull at the huge handle produced an animal in a livery, which he thought was a very queer one for a page to a viscount. The little urchin who

opened the area-door was not only dressed in black, but had also a very black face, except round the region of his mouth, which seemed to have been robbed of its nigerity, by an enormous slice of bread and butter, which he was munching, and which bore deeply-imprinted proofs that his hands were as black as his face, which was not surprising, as he had just descended the flue of his lordship's kitchen-chimney.

"Vell ! vot are you arter, my rummy von, avaking all the hardvurked 'mesties o' this ere werry respectibul hestablishment, at this hunconshus hour o' the day ?" inquired this specimen of that interesting class — the climbing-boys.

"I'm come to dine and spend the day with Lord Wastepaper," replied Ninny, "and I want to be let in."

"Don't you vish you may?" said chummy, with a grin which displayed a splendid set of grinders, which proved the superiority of carbon as a dentifrice.

"Yes, I do ; and if you have any more of your impudence, I'll give you a good thrashing, you little dirty—"

Chummy interrupted this speech by first turning and knocking the soot out of the "western" side of his trousers, and then putting his thumb to his nose, and twiddling his four fingers energetically, at the same time assuring him that "no respectibul person ever thowt of touching a chummy, for fear 'o being 'taminated 'sept upon Mayday, ven ve's softsoaped and hearthstoned on purpose."

Ninny was going to prove that this rule, like most others, is provided with an exception, but, upon trying the iron-gate, found it was locked, at which chummy redoubled his antics.

"Tell the servant I want to speak to him, and I'll give you sixpence," said Ninny, willing to try another tack.

"Chuck un down, then," replied the sweeper. And as soon as he had picked it up and rung it on the stone steps to ascertain that it was not a "smasher's tanner," he pocketed it, and observed,

"Vy, as to the servants, as you calls the gentlemen and ladies as is members of this society, every vun o' them is jist as fast as that

ere lock as you couldn't undo. There's no vun up down below but my master, as is a haven of his breakfast in the pantenny."

"Who let you in, then?" inquired Ninny.

"No vun — we allys lets ourselves in — least ways sich tip-top uns as us, as can be trusted not to bone the moveables. Cook gis master the hary key last thing at night arter the governor's gone to roost, and a good blow-out in the morning, cos she don't like to be woke out of her sleep at onlady-like hours.

"What the deuce am I to do then?" asked Ninny.

"Vy, if I was you, I'd cut up to Islington brick-fields, or Copemhagem House, and have an hour or two's fun at pelting the frogs in the ponds—there's lots about there—I've had some rare sport—that's to say of a hevening; but I must cut too; master's chock-full by this, and will hollar arter me, and I shall get larruped for not filling the sut-bag."

Ninny was left to his own resources, and, instead of following the advice of chummy, inquired his way to the parks, and seeing other

gentlemen amusing them by bathing in the Serpentine, thought he could not do better than follow their example. Observing a man near a boat that was curiously fitted up with ropes, hooks, and poles, he inquired "if it was deep just there?"

The "royal humane" assured him it was perfectly safe, and quite shallow all along his beat. Ninny therefore undressed, and jumped fearlessly in, though he was like those gentlemen who "took a boat and went to Philippi," and could not swim. Down he went, much deeper than he expected, and when he rose to the surface and found he could not touch ground, he began kicking and screaming most drowningly.

This was enough for the "humane." He called loudly for "help!—a boy drowned;" but before assistance could arrive, he contrived to drag Ninny out with a boathook, as he was determined to win the society's medal, for which he had entered himself.

A large crowd was of course collected, who all declared that he was a noble fellow for saving the boy's life, and had no doubt that if he took

him home to his friends he would be “handsomely rewarded.”

Upon finding that he was an honourable, and on a visit to a lord, these doubts were settled, and several of the society’s men were anxious to assist in the matter of conveying him home ; but as that was against the rules, Ninny was put into a hackney-coach with the benevolent individual who had so heroically saved his life, and who received a five-pound note for his exertions from Lord Wastepaper, and the promise of a recommendation for the society’s gold medal.

The man wisely employed a gentleman of the press to communicate the “narrow escape from a dreadful death by drowning, and the meritorious conduct of one of the officers employed by the Royal Humane Society,” to the newspapers, and reaped the fruits of the information with which the paragraph concluded — “the name of the man who thus saved, at the risk of his own valuable life — for he has a wife and seven or eight little children—the heir to a noble house, is, we hear, Simon Sharpe, living at No 6, Johnson’s-buildings, Edgeware Road.”

At breakfast Ninny contrived to make so very excellent a meal, that his patron began to think a cold-bath beforehand was really very efficacious in procuring an inordinate appetite ; but he had not much time to think on the subject, or to talk with his guest, as he was busily engaged in endeavouring to discover in any one of the morning papers that were placed on the table a notice of the “few remarks he had ventured to make to the House, on the important bill introduced by his noble friend (his bitterest enemy) on the Cross Benches.” As he was not successful in finding any thing more than the usual “Lord Wastepaper” made some observations, which were inaudible in the gallery, and uttered amidst the noise of all the peers leaving the house,” he was not in a very good humour to entertain Augustus ; he therefore pleaded “business of great importance ;” and gave him a guinea to go and see the Panorama, or any lion he thought fit, with a strict injunction to be in by six o’clock, ready to dress for dinner.

Ninny, however, spent the greater part of the

morning in Grosvenor-mews with his lordship's coachman, who, excepting the landlord of the Red Cow, was the only person in London with whom he was upon intimate terms. In the afternoon, this worthy, who happened to be off duty that day, took the boy, as the greatest treat he could give him, to the Fives Court, for the benefit of his morals and Bill Eales, whose friends—admirers of the art of self-defence—had agreed to assemble on that day, to compensate him for being soundly thrashed by Mr. John Scroggins. Here Ninny was introduced to the heroes of the prize-ring, and had the honour of being told that he would one day or other do credit to the P. C. — (an hieroglyphic that stands for the Pugilistic Club as well as for the Privy Council) if he would only put himself under a good tutor immediately, and train regularly.

When the sets-to were ended, an adjournment took place to a public kept by one of the Fancy — *un homme de l'imagination*, as our neighbours translate it — who was called by the family cognomen, or rather agnomen, of “Uncle Ben,” where Ninny was greatly edified by an exhibi-

tion of fighting-dogs, and an exposition of their pluck and weight. This was diversified by a lecture on fighting-cocks, by a lover of that innocent amusement, and a description of a prize-fight, in which one man had been killed on the spot and his antagonist maimed for life. With these little amusements, a few flash songs, and sundry pots of porter — heavy, I beg pardon — the afternoon passed very rapidly and pleasantly.

When he returned to my lord's, and dinner was announced, Ninny felt the effects of the porter, just sufficiently to do away with any little shyness that a Rotherwickian of only six months' standing might have felt, on being introduced to a small party of seven honourable gentlemen, six of whom were perfect strangers to him, and eyed his shrunken blues, with bright basket-buttons, rather suspiciously, if not contemptuously; but dropped all signs of wonder, when they were informed by Lord Wastepaper that he was a Rotherwickian, and just going home for the holidays.

At dinner our hero took wine with every body, and ate surprisingly—to those, at least,

who had forgotten how little they had to eat while fags.

After dinner, his lordship thinking, from the way his tongue was beginning to run, that the sooner he had his one glass of wine, and was despatched to bed, the better it would be for the character of Rotherwick, asked him, "if he would take one more glass of Madeira?"

"No, thank you, old boy," replied Ninny; "it strikes me as rather acid—I'll try four or five of your port, as a foundation for the claret."

This answer produced, at first, a stare at the little wretch, and then, as it was a bachelor-party, a loud laugh, in which the cause of it joined most heartily.

One of the party, a notorious wag, began, much to the annoyance of his lordship, to draw the boy out; and, by supplying him with wine, obtained a rich description of the modes of thinking and acting at a Rotherwick.

On the subject of the way in which he had passed the day, Ninny had learned his lesson—never to turn informer—too well, to say one

word, though the wag strongly suspected he could "get a rise" out of him on that score.

At last the wine began to operate in the usual way, and at a signal from his lordship, the butler removed the unwilling guest from the table; who, upon retreating, as well as he could articulate, assured his friends, that "he had never met such a set of regular trumps in his life."

On his return home, Lady Fuddlehead was so much shocked by the change for the worse that had, as she thought, taken place in her son, that she almost resolved not to send him back again. But in this she was overruled by Lady Skinnykin, who assured her, that "all would be set right by the time he got into the fifth form;" and by Slushem, the nurse, who asserted, that "she never did, in the ole cwerse of her life—no, never—see such an impruvment in any young gentleman; there wasn't a maid in the establishment that he hadn't something to say to, as set 'em giggling and laughing the ole day—he was *so* witty, and *so* larned!"

As his father thought but little about it, and cared less, after the holidays Ninny returned to

school, with an enlarged tip, and a supply of adventures, to record to his friends. As for fagging, he cared but little about it now, and knew how to take pretty good care of himself, by dint of cribbing and shirking.

Things, therefore, went on pretty much the same for the next two years. He gained two removes; and could, by exchanging a share of pudding or pie, get a respectable copy of verses done—for him. At that period an event occurred, which caused a great sensation, and a still greater alteration in the school.

Dr. Worthy retired from the head-mastership, with the good wishes of all his pupils, and a large service of plate, with which they presented him; but, better than all, with a good living, and a comfortable feeling, that he had emancipated himself from that most horrible of all slaveries—the situation of schoolmaster.

“Delightful task,” &c. he would quote over his port, and offer any odds the lines were never written by a pedagogus.

He was succeeded by Mr. Innovate, a young man who had gained the highest honours in

Oxford, which were so seldom gained in those days, as to ensure the gainer of them promotion—provided he was well born, and better patronised. This was the case with Mr. Innovate, who, after taking his double first, was appointed private tutor in the family of a nobleman, who had great influence with the trustees of Rotherwick, on the foundation of which he had been educated. In the language of the turf, he “distanced the whole lot” of his competitors, and entered on his duties with zeal, if not with discretion. He wisely thought that the shoe-and-knife-cleaning-department might be advantageously transferred from the young gentlemen, to hired servants, and, resolving to “*reform* it altogether,” scheduled the tea-kettles, frying-pans, knife-boards, and bath-bricks. He also forbade the use of living warming-pans, and interdicted cooking sausages, and bolstering. The windows too were so closely barred, that all chance of introducing hot ducks and porter from the “Red Cow” was done away with. If any boy was caught out in “tipping out down the lane,” the master was flogged

for it instead of the fag—which soon put an end to the system.

He might possibly have stopped there, and permitted fagging to go on, as far as running about went, fagging out at cricket, and getting a little water from the pump, had not the cruel conduct of Black Jack, who was now captain in gown-boys, come to his ears.

This nice youth, who never shared in any of the manly games of the place, used to amuse himself by torturing the little boys in the most ingenious ways. His great delight was to spoil their watches, stick cobblers' wax into their hair, or cut it off closely on *one* side of their heads; blow pepper into their eyes; and destroy the foul copies of their verses or exercises, just as they were going to copy them out fair; in short, there was nothing which was calculated to annoy another, that he was not *au fait* at discovering and executing.

He was hated most cordially by his juniors, and cut by his equals in age, who never noticed him but to protect some little fellow, when they could discover he was bullying him, which was

not often, as they dared not complain, and his torturing was done whilst most of the boys were out playing at cricket, hockey, or tennis.

One little lad, for bullying whom he had been, deservedly, severely beaten, was forced to plead æger, and was sent to the matron's, which was used as a sort of infirmary. When the physician arrived, he found the glands on each side of his throat frightfully swollen, and marks of severe bruises on the back of his neck. He was very ill, but refused to give any account of his bruises.

He said he *dared* not do so; but he allowed that the cold and fever, under which he was suffering, were probably caused by his having poured water into his shoes on purpose to make himself ill, that he might be sent home to his friends. He was sent home, and, when he was, as he thought, dying on his mother's bosom, he revealed to her that the cause of the injuries about his neck and throat was Black Jack's having taken him by both his ears, and beaten his head for several minutes against one of the windows in the cloisters, because he had refused

to let him see a letter which he had written home, and which he fancied contained an account of his being so shamefully bullied by him as to call for the intercession of his schoolfellows.

The boy recovered, but refused to return to school while Black Jack was in it. A friend informed Mr. Innovate of all the circumstances, and he immediately made up his mind to give the wretch the option of being soundly flogged, or taking his name off the books—knowing full well that his cowardly nature would lead him to prefer expulsion — for such it was virtually—to corporeal suffering. He accordingly “accepted the Chilterns, and vacated his seat,” amidst the hootings, hissings, and maledictions of the boys.

Mr. Innovate made the brutality of Black Jack an excuse for doing away with the systems of fagging and bullying altogether. Sweeping measures were resolved upon, and, as he was a new broom, he determined to sweep very clean. The name of fag was abolished — the monitors were changed into præpositi, and the office no longer confined to the boys of the sixth form, but conferred on the senior in each class. The

schell was also scheduled, the name of *forms* changed into classes, and the order of them reversed, so that what was the honourable sixth form, was altered to the hitherto dishonourable first class. Flogging also was abolished, except for heinous offences.

The boys did not at all relish these changes, but the novelty of the thing amused them, and they might probably have been reconciled to them after a little while, had not the well-meant but mistaken zeal of the head-master carried him on to a most absurd extent.

The "education of the working-classes" was at this time a favourite topic—a hobby, as Sterne would call it—with certain individuals, within and without the walls of Parliament. Public meetings were held, long speeches delivered, and powerful treatises written on the important subject; and amongst the most zealous and persevering advocates for a change in the "old humdrum system," and the macadamization of a new road to wisdom, were two gentlemen, neither of whom had the honour of a seat in the house.

Each of these had a system of his own, which,

of course, was the most efficacious that ever was invented, and each endeavoured to convince the other of the fact. In this it is needless to say he did not succeed. The public were divided on the subject. Some advocated the system of Dr. Tintinabulum, but the majority favoured the scheme of Mr. Lackteacher, because it was rather the more absurd and expensive of the two. Some gentleman having classically remarked that "the proof of a pudding is in the eating of it," it was agreed that a subscription should be raised, and both plans put upon their trial. A committee was appointed, the members of which were to act as a jury, and give a verdict according to the evidence — or their own prejudices;—as to a judge of the case, they had not one among them.

At these meetings Mr. Innovate was a constant attendant, and took a prominent part in the discussions that arose. He was listened to with great attention, because his speeches superabounded with Latin and Greek quotations, of which the greater part of his admiring hearers did not understand one word. After assigning

a great many strong reasons why he should *not* do so, he declared his preference for the plans of Dr. Tintinabulum, and his determination to introduce it into his own school of Rotherwick. This declaration was received with "deafening cheers" by the Tintinabularians, which were increased to roars of delight when the doctor sprung upon the platform, and embraced the convert to his system. The Lackteacherians were chapfallen, and left the room with unpleasant feelings of all-no-howishness.

After many interviews and much discussion between the doctor and his pupil, the plan intended for national schools, and others of the same grade, was supposed to be matured for and applicable to the sons of noblemen and gentlemen. It was a comfortable plan for the undermasters, who had nothing to do but to walk up and down the school-room, as their duties of teaching and correcting exercises were transferred to the præpositus of each class, under the superintendence of the head-master.

If hard working could have ensured success, Mr. Innovate ought to have succeeded, for no

man ever worked harder than he did. All day long he was engaged in "drill-drill-drilling" the boys, and teaching them to walk two-and-two into school; to sit down all together at the wave of his hand downwards, and to rise again at the same minute, on the signal given by a wave upwards. Then the orders "handle your books," "open your books," and "begin construing," were expected to be executed simultaneously. All this was great fun for the boys, and shortened their lessons very much, as they committed a great many blunders on purpose to prolong the exercise.

His nights must have been occupied in writing and preparing grammars and books to supersede the Eton grammars, and the *selectæ* of the "old humdrum system;" and how he found time for half that he got through was a matter of surprise to every one. His exertions were crowned with success in one respect — he doubled the number of his pupils, and, as a natural consequence, the amount of his "peculium;" for, many persons being given to a love of change, sent their sons to be experimented upon in this "short cut" to

classical knowledge, from which they gained no "returns."

As the old boys went away, and the new ones succeeded, the difficulties of bringing the new system to perfection were considerably diminished—there were fewer prejudices to be contended with.

Ninny, who liked the system amazingly, as he got all his lessons construed and parsed for him by some other boy—his exercises done from cribs—and his verses from the *gradus*—was now in the first class, and nearly seventeen years of age. His outside had improved amazingly. He was tall, well-formed, and very strong; a capital boxer and fencer, and celebrated as a cricketer and tennis-player; in short, he was looked upon as a leader in athletics and larks.

At this period Mr. Innovate was convinced that the time had arrived for the completion of all his plans. Red-letter days were no longer to be claimed as holidays; the three half-school days were lengthened into whole school-days: the time formerly devoted to play was to be occupied in perfecting the drilling; football was

abolished as dangerous, and the converting of little boys into "horses" was interdicted, and pronounced to be "cruelty to animals." The glories of "governors' day," and the fun of driving carriages and drinking porter at the Red Cow were annihilated, and the singing of *Dulce domum* was as rigidly forbidden among the Rotherwickians, as the *ranze des vaches* was among the home-loving Swiss — and for the same reasons.

The boys began to grumble and complain in private, and some assured their friends that they would "stand it no longer." Concios at length began to be held of the seniors, the results of which were canvassed in small groups and meetings of the juniors. The ground of complaint was that their *privileges* were interfered with, and the old customs done away. "It was their *privilege* to have three half-holidays in the week; it was their *privilege* to have a whole holiday on saints'-days; it had been the *custom* of the school to attend governors' meetings, drive carriages, and drink porter at the Red Cow; to kick each other's shins at football, flog little

boys in a *team*, and sing *Dulce domum* when and wherever they pleased." It was resolved, *nem. con.*, to maintain their privileges at any risk.

An opportunity soon presented itself for carrying this resolution into effect. The 5th of November was near at hand, and on that day it had been their privilege to have a whole holiday, and a large bonfire, in which to immolate a *guy*.

Mr. Innovate had given public notice that this custom was to be honoured in its breach; that they were to attend chapel twice, instead of having a holiday, and that no bonfires were to be allowed.

A concio was called and held, and every boy pledged himself to maintain the privileges against the laws. They agreed not to go to chapel at all, to get up early, collect the materials, and light up a much larger bonfire than had ever been seen within the walls. A subscription was raised to purchase combustibles, and the plan of proceedings settled.

On the morning of the fifth, Mr. Innovate was deeply engaged in his study, until the bell rang for chapel, in finishing a very interesting

discourse, which he intended delivering to his pupils, on the iniquitousness of the attempt of Mr. Fawkes and the conspirators to blow up such a respectable assembly as the house of parliament (I beg pardon for digressing—but they are “blown up” every day now by every body, and no notice taken of it ! *tempora mutantur*). With this laboured tirade in his pocket he proceeded to chapel, and as soon as he was in the vestry, putting on his surplice, the chapel-door was locked by our hero, Augustus, who had secreted himself behind it for that purpose.

When Mr. Innovate entered the reading-desk he was surprised to find no one in chapel but “dearly beloved Roger,” the clerk. He waited for ten minutes, expecting the boys to come in, and meditating in his mind a suitable punishment for so unjustifiable a delay. He then desired the clerk to go and tell the præpositi to bring the boys in immediately. Roger proceeded to the door, and, to *his* great surprise, found that, like Sterne’s starling, “he could not get out.” This discovery he communicated to the master, who rushed to ascertain the correct-

ness of it. Repeated trials and a glimpse of the bolt convinced him of the fact — that he, the head-master of Rotherwick, was locked up against his will, and against all statutes in that case made and provided. He walked round and round the chapel, and examined the windows to find an exit, but without success, as they were very high above the ground to insure the boys not looking *out*, and firmly guarded by iron wire to prevent the cricket-balls from coming *in*.

He puzzled himself for some time to account for his being confined. It never once occurred to him that it was done purposely, and by one of his boys. "They did not *dare* to do such a thing," he assured the clerk, when he suggested to him the possibility of such an outrage ; "they were under excellent controul." At this instant, before the words were out of his lips, a loud shout rent the air, and immense volumes of smoke were seen rolling along by the chapel-windows.

"Why, they've lit up already !" said Roger.

"Lit up, sirrah ! What do you mean ?"

"Why, burning Guy afore his time. They

never used to light up afore dark afore this. It's a jolly big bonfire, however."

"A bonfire?" said Mr. Innovate, "impossible! I forbade it, sirrah!"

"Well, sir, all as I can say is," replied Roger, "that they have been getting in tar-barrels, oil-caskeses, and sugar-hogsheads, and such other rumbusticles, all the morning."

"Impossible, sirrah!—I tell you it's impossible—I forbade it."

"If you'd only condescend to climb up to the belfry, you'll see if I have not prophesied right," said Roger, leading the way.

"I will, sirrah! but stop, before we proceed, allow me to inform you that to use the word 'prophecy' of any event that has actually taken place is incorrect in the extreme."

After this very seasonable exposition of his accuracy in the use of words, the master took off his surplice, and climbed up into the belfry, where he saw sufficient to convince him that Roger's prophecy was fulfilled.

In the centre of the green was an enormous pile of flame, which was just getting to its

height, and over the centre of it—oh, horror!—was a *fac-simile* of himself, dressed in his academics, suspended by the neck from a gallows. Around it were dancing four or five hundred little urchins, who looked, through the smoke, like a lot of Indians performing their orgies round a war-fire, or a nation of cannibals anticipating a delectable slice of roasted enemy.

All sorts of shouts, shrieks, and cries, were heard at intervals; but when the flame caught the Guy, and his gown, which had been saturated with turpentine, and burst out into a blaze, one loud hurrah! “held out,” as the music people say, to a great length, shewed the delight and satisfaction of the spectators.

“Can I get out upon the roof, Roger?” said Mr. Innovate. “I must put an immediate stop to this. I will harangue them on their impropriety first, and flog them all afterwards.”

Roger led the way through a trap to the tower roof, and, as soon as Mr. Innovate had succeeded in following his leader, he commenced shouting to the different *præpositi* by name, and desiring them to put out the bonfire and come to him immediately.

Whether the wind set the wrong way, or the crackling of the flames drowned his voice, he was not certain; but he was certain of this, that no attention whatever was paid to it. That he was seen he was convinced, for the whole crowd shirked off to the further side of the fire, and dispersed themselves about in all directions, leaving the guy to his fate.

“If you go down now, sir, you’ll find the door unlocked, I *prophesy*,” said Roger.

“Prophecy again! but why do you think so?”

“Becos, while you was a holloring, I seed one of the boys cut across to the cloisters, and turn down towards the chapel-door—he know’d you was safe enough up here—and took the opportunity to unlock the door.”

In this, his second prophecy, Roger was quite right, and Mr. Innovate proceeded in haste to the green, which he found deserted, and arrived at the fire just in time to see the gallows, which had supported his representative, fall into the midst of the flames.

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CHAPTER XII.

MR. INNOVATE, we are sorry to say, was in a very great passion, and when he found no one in the green, upon whom he could vent his ire, his passion was considerably increased. He dodged round the bonfire, expecting to find some little unfortunate delinquent raking out the potatoes, which on such occasions were invariably subjected to the "fiery ordeal," to prevent a waste of fuel, and solace the palates of the juniors. All his dodges, however, did not avail him—every boy had, in the classical language of Rotherwick, "cut his lucky," which, in theatrical parlance, means, "made his exit."

Mr. Innovate waxed warm; whether from the volcano of wrath raging within him, or from the heat of the bonfire, it is impossible to say; but Roger averred, that the "prispiration run

down off his fizonomy as it does off the ruf of a new-tiled lean-to."

"Roger," said the master, "we must extinguish this alarming mass of igneous matter."

"If," replied Roger, "you mean to put out this here bunfire, it strikes me very forcibly as it ain't quite a going to be done just quite so aisy as you seems to conceive; look at that 'ere guy—the 'xact image of yourself—he'd burn a good un for a hour or tu, he's satirized 'ith tar."

"Saturated, sirrah! saturated, you mean. How is it—how can it be, that this poor unsophisticated creature, born within the precincts of this classical atmosphere, should be plunged into such a profundity of ignorance of the commonest decencies of expression?" soliloquized Mr. Innovate, as he commenced a vigorous attack on the combustibles with his feet. As long as he confined his kickings and stampings to the outside fagots, the experiment was successful; but, as soon as he reached the glowing embers, his shins, which were only protected by silk stockings—for the fashion in those days





compelled the head-master to resort to "shorts and silks," now nearly obsolete—began to feel, firstly, very uncomfortable; secondly, very painful; thirdly, and lastly, positively unbearable.

It seems paradoxical, that we, human beings, in the excess of either delight or pain, should express those different feelings by dancing; but so it is. Give a child a cake or a shilling, and the moment he's out of your sight he begins dancing to show his joy. Give the same urchin a smart box on the ear, and he will dance, perhaps more actively, to indicate the pain he feels.

This philosophical view of stimulants to Terpsichorean motions—I, Peter Priggins, feel it my duty to give to the public, in order that they, the public, may not feel shocked when I tell them, that the head-master of Rotherwick was seen by all his boys, in the unacademical act of dancing most *operatically* and energetically at their fireside.

The *pas-seul*, however well performed, did not seem to alleviate the pain, as the sufferer was observed by his highly-delighted pupils to apply his hands rapidly, with an up-and-down

motion, to the scorched limbs, and calling on Roger (so they guessed by his motions) to assist in the manipulation of the injured parts. Roger, however, was so tickled at seeing a fellow-creature suffering excessive pain, that, as he confessed afterwards, "he couldn't in no ways be of no sort of sarvice, as his laughabilities got so much the better on him, as he was forced to pretend to sniz werry wiolently, and stuff his 'ankercher into his mouf, to prevent the dominie from diskivering of him."

We are told that silks of all sorts have deteriorated in quality since the days of our grandsires, which may be true or false, as most assertions are. Mr. Innovate doubtless gave a full price for his silks, and doubtless had the best quality of "men's silk hose;" but the smell of fire had not passed over them with impunity; the web was injured, and the rubbing process brought away a considerable portion of it, leaving exposed a pair of stalwart shanks, resembling a fresh-cut beafsteak in their ruberity.

The master pointed out the "*hiatus valde deflendus*" to Roger, who, having stuffed the

whole of his bandana into his facial orifice, and not having a second edition to resort to, could not restrain his laughter, but burst into a choky sort of chuckle, any thing but sympathetic.

“ὦ ἐγὼ δύστηνος,” said Mr. Innovate, surveying his silks, “ὅι μοι, πῦ στῶ, πᾶ βῶ; ὕχομαι δὴ ὕχομαι; παπ-παππα! παππαππα!”

“Oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! he! he! he!” replied Roger, holding his hands hard upon his frontal protuberance, evidently alarmed, lest his uncontrollable laughter should rupture his peritoneum; and standing on one leg at a time, like a fatigued fowl.

Mr. Innovate would probably have run through several choruses of Euripides, Sophocles, and Æschylus, in giving classical vent to his feelings, had he not espied Roger indulging his mirth at his expense. Unfortunately for the clerk he did so; and though the sight of his mirth acted as a counter-irritant on his legs, it caused a great deal of irritation in Mr. Innovate’s mind, which he displayed by searching for a weapon to punish the offender. *Furor arma ministrat*—the light of Mr. Innovate’s

eye lighted on a lighted stave of one of the oil "caskeses." He seized and brandished the brand, and like a fury, armed with a torch, rushed on the mirth-exhausted Amen, and knocked him down with the first blow; the second fell on his head, or rather his wig, which being unprotected by his hat, and saturated with animal oil—the result of several years of servitude—imitated the mansion of Mr. Ucalegon, in Troy, and burst out into very vivid flames.

"Dash my wig!" exclaimed Roger, executing rapid rotatory motions with both his hands to extinguish the frizzling hair, "whatever shall I git to put un out?"

"Υδωρ μὲν ἄριστον," replied Mr. Innovate, leaving the semi-usted wig and its wearer to their fate, and striding away as fast as his injured shins would allow him to go; an act of unkindness, of which he would not have been guilty, had not the shouts of the boys, who were gazing through the cloister-windows, and screaming in ecstasy at the tragicomic termination of their attempt to assert their "privileges," and maintain the "customs" of the school, attracted his

attention, and caused him to forget his humanity.

The approach of the master was, of course, a signal to disperse, and like frightened rabbits, when a dog approaches the warren, the boys showed their scuts, and went to earth so rapidly, that when Mr. Innovate reached the cloisters, nothing was to be seen but the door leading to gown-boys, and that firmly fastened on the inside.

Finding all attempts to gain admission vain, and after expostulating, threatening, and entreating, in all the living and dead languages with which his reading furnished him, Mr. Innovate wisely resolved to go to his house, apply a healing salve to his smarting shins, put on a fresh pair of silks, and summon the under-masters to a council.

He summoned them, but not one of them answered the summons—they had all wisely taken advantage of a whole holiday, to breathe the fresh air of the neighbouring fields, or to enjoy themselves in some way or other. The writing-master, who lodged at the gardener's house,

and who was a clever, shrewd, long-headed Scotchman, happened to be at home, waiting anxiously for his pupil—the son of a Scotch nobleman, intrusted to his especial care—and wondering what could possibly have detained him from his stirabout and morning lecture.

Mr. Innovate wisely resolved to call upon him to assist him in his difficulties. The boys indeed asserted—but schoolboys will assert any thing—that he often resorted to this gentleman's assistance in composing the annual oration, and doing other little bits of latinity, that were to be subjected to the ordeal of public criticism. Be that as it may, he certainly called upon him to aid him on this occasion, and Mr. Splitquill responded to the call, after he had doffed the tartan dressing-gown and trousers, in which he sat at home to save his best suit, put on a clean white tie, and washed the marks of the “auld Gillespie,” in which he indulged copiously, from his visage.

Mr. Innovate related at large the whole proceedings of the morning very candidly, not omitting his attempt to extinguish the illegal

bonfire, and making a living guy of poor Roger; at which Mr. Splitquill would have laughed outright, had he not resorted to a huge pinch of "auld Gillespie," and pretended to sneeze in a way that an habitual snufftaker had no business to do. He executed the manœuvre very naturally and very loudly, and by smothering his face in a large cotton imitation of a silk pocket-handkerchief, succeeded in disguising his proneness to risibility.

After a long debate, in which strong arguments were adduced on both sides, and an attempt was made on the part of Mr. Splitquill to represent the affair as a "mere trifle," Mr. Innovate roared out, "*hæ nugæ seria ducent in mala*," and pronounced firmly, but not politely, the "privilege question" to be "all humbug," and asserted his determination to vindicate "the law," let the result be what it would.

Mr. Splitquill accompanied Mr. Innovate round to all the doors by which access was usually gained to the hall, where the boys were assembled. At none could they gain admittance; and Mr. Splitquill patriotically, consi-

dering the risk he ran, volunteered to address the rebels through the bars of one of the windows.

Now the writing-master, though a severe man, was liked by the boys for himself, because he was not a sneak, but more for his pupil's sake, who was deservedly beloved by the whole school — though they did laugh at his *short* corderoys, and *shorter* commons of stirabout. When, therefore, his snuffy face was seen peering through the bars, no missiles were hurled at it — which certainly would have been the case had any of the other masters ventured on “putting in (so rash) an appearance.”

His arguments and expostulations, though kindly and laughingly received, had no effect on the boys, who begged him to announce their unchangeable determination to maintain their “privileges” at all risks. He, therefore, “left the bar” of the window, and told the result of his negotiations to Mr. Innovate, who was walking up and down under the windows, in what is vulgarly called a *quandary*, logically a *dilemma*.

Manning was sent for, and ordered to manu-

facture a gross of rods—which order made him happier than he had ever been in his life. He had never had so large an order for his favourite goods before, and he resolved to surpass himself in the execution of it. The cook was ordered to “stop the supplies,” and the butler was forbidden to provide the usual edibles and drinkables which came under his department—the garrison was to be starved out.

When the under-masters returned to their dinner and pint of wine in Stream Hall, a sort of Rotherwickian common-room, they were informed of what had occurred, and (after making a very excellent meal, and absorbing the allowance of port), proceeded in a body to the head-master’s to hold a seniority, as we call it at college, on the proceedings to be taken.

It would be tedious to give an account of all that took place — suffice it to say, that hunger compelled the rebels to throw open the gates in less than twenty-four hours, though they did so, declaring that not one of them would submit to be flogged or punished in any way for maintaining their “privileges.” This might have

led to serious difficulties, had it not fortunately happened that one of the boys was taken seriously ill from his confinement, and the disorder pronounced by the physician of Rotherwick to be "catching." This fortunate circumstance solved the Gordian knot of the difficulties; the boys were sent home, and the "privilege question" was allowed to fall to the ground.

My hero, the Hon. A. N. Nincompoop, was unfortunately the individual who so fortunately relieved the honourable house of Rotherwick from its dilemma; though, fortunately for him, the physician of his honourable friend Lord Wastepaper, to whose care he was consigned, discovered that what was pronounced by the Rotherwickian medical to be a "catching" disorder, was nothing more than a slight disturbance of the functions of the liver, arising from his having eaten an unfair portion of cold plum-pudding, which was set to rights by the pleasant application of what was called at Rotherwick, a draught of "black soup."

He arrived at home in excellent health and spirits. Lady Skinnykin pronounced him "per-

fect ;” his mother thought him greatly improved, and his father wondered “ how the deuce a mere child had imbibed such very odd ideas of men and things.” Mrs. Slushem kept a stricter eye on the feminine domestics, and Mr. Nutmeg missed sundry bottles of Lord Fuddlehead’s best claret and burgundy, which he had set aside for his own private use. The neighbours all allowed him to be a fine young man, but pronounced him a “ *little too fast*.” Into his home career it is not my province to intrude. I shall, as I professed, confine myself to his school and college proceedings.

On his return to Rotherwick, Ninny felt rather nervous lest the “ privilege question ” should again come on the *tapis*, and lead to unpleasant results ; but he was quickly relieved from his uneasiness on that score, as not the slightest allusion was made to it. Mr. Innovate’s time and attention were entirely taken up in preparing his boys for the “ grand public examination,” at which it was to be made to appear to the advocates for the “ railroad system

of learning," that Dr. Tintinabulum's plans were the "perfection of practicability."

Night and day did Mr. Innovate drill the boys. The slates and slatepencils, the books and maps were almost worn out by being "handled," and the boys quite worn out with handling them. The marching by two and two, and the simultaneous uprisings and down-sittings were very neatly executed. Mr. Innovate was satisfied and happy.

The great, the important day at length arrived, and with it arrived a great many carriages and a great many people ; some in private, some in glass coaches, and a very considerable majority in jarvies. All, however, were welcomed by the head-master with smiles of anticipatory triumph over the "old humdrum system" of teaching, and ushered to their seats by the præpositi, who were, as well as the other boys, "dressed all in their best," and behaved remarkably civil, taking care to make their remarks and observations just loud enough to be heard by the quizzes, and not by the masters.

When the examiners, Dr. Tintinabulum and

Mr. Lackteacher entered the school-room, which they did very affectionately, arm-in-arm, the partizans of each vied with each other in making as much noise as they possibly could, in which the boys of course joined, because they liked a row, and it relieved their nervousness.

When the tumult dwindled to a calm, Mr. Innovate rustled his gown-sleeves, removed his trencher from his head, and waved it gracefully downwards, as a signal for all to sit down.

The manœuvre went off so well, that Miss Sniggs, a Tintinabularian, observed in an audible whisper to Miss Biggs, "How elegant, how simple, and oh ! how exact !"

But Miss Biggs being a Lackteacherian, turned up her snub-nose more snubbishly, and replied still more audibly, "And very — very mechanical !"

Sniggs looked daggers at Biggs, and Biggs returned it with interest.

"Præpositus of the first," cried Mr. Innovate, "see your boys in order."

"Prepare to rise," replied the præpo.

"Rise !" exclaimed the master, which they

all did at once, except some half-dozen, among whom was Ninny, who were fastened down to their seats by a plentiful application of cobbler's-wax.

“Down again,” screamed the præpo, in alarm. “Now up altogether.”

The adhesiveness of the wax prevented this second attempt at simultaneous consurgity being executed as successfully as it might have been, but it was decidedly better than the first.

“Prepare to go up!” said the præpo. “Go up!”

Up marched the boys, and took their places in pretty good order, considering that sundry pinches and kicks were lavished in their march upon those before them by the hinder boys.

“Handle your books!” — “Open your books!” — “Prepare to construe!” — “Construe!” said præpo.

“How can they construe,” inquired Mr. Lackteacher, who was viewing these proceedings with an insidious smile, and winking at Miss Biggs and others of his favourers, “when you have not given them a passage?”

‘ Oh ! all that,’ observed Mr. Innovate,
“ is—”

“ Ay, I see,” said Mr. Lackteacher, “ all ready—cut and dried.”

“ The passages are already selected,” remarked Dr. Tintinabulum, looking to his party for support, who followed Miss Sniggs’s example in uttering a gentle “ Hear ! hear !”

“ Let me hear silence !” cried the master to the boys, who were tittering and whispering.

“ I don’t exactly see how that’s possible,” said Mr. Lackteacher. “ Silence being the absence of all noise, how can you *hear* it ?”

“ Very good ! very good !” replied the master, grinning vindictively at his pupils, who were delighted at seeing him snubbed.

“ No. 6, prepare to begin !” — “ Begin,” said præpo.

Now No. 6 happened to be Ninny’s place, and against him præpo. had a spite for having cowed his bed the preceding night. Ninny was therefore taken aback, as the sailors say, and was not “ prepared to begin.” A frown from Mr. Innovate, floggingly put on, hastened

his preparations, and he commenced the Epode of Horace which had been previously selected,

“ Ibis Liburnis inter alta navium.”

“ Decline *ibis*,” said Mr. Lackteacher.

“ Nominative *hic et hæc ibs*, genitive *ibis*,” replied Ninny, confidently.

A sneer from Lackteacher, and a universal grin from the boys, confirmed Mr. Innovate in his opinion that such an iniquity deserved immediate notice. He hurled the Horace which he held in his hand with so true an aim at Ninny’s head, that he imitated the Grecian hero of old, and measured his length on the ground.

“ Good ’evans, how brutal !” exclaimed Miss Sniggs.

“ Served him perfectly right, mum,” replied Miss Biggs, “ though I do rigidly object to corporal punishment.”

“ Pick up the book, and go down three removes,” shouted Mr. Innovate — a command which Ninny readily obeyed, amidst the laughter and congratulations of his friends.

No. 9 being next called on, got on swimmingly until he came to the line,

“An hunc laborem men ∞ *laturi*,” &c.,

when he shortened the penultimate of the last word, and told Mr. Lackteacher it was the “dative case of *latus*, *laturis*—a side.”

“Go to the bottom of the school, despicable dunce!” said Mr. Innovate, and forwarded his journey thither by an application of his hands to his shoulders that sent him with his face on the floor, which certainly was the “bottom of the school.”

The Latin being rather a failure, Dr. T. suggested that possibly the Greek might go off better; a hint that Mr. Innovate took by giving the order—“Prepare your Hecubas!”—“Open your Hecubas!”—“Construe!” This certainly succeeded better, until No. 5, coming to the lines in the chorus, where the *olim* Queen of Troy, wishing to let her daughter, Polyxena, know the agreeable news she had in store for her, says,

“ $\epsilon' \xi \epsilon \lambda \theta'$
 $\epsilon' \xi \epsilon \lambda \theta', \acute{o} \iota \kappa \tilde{\omega} \nu.$ ”

“Come out—come out,” said No. 5, hesitating,

“—of the cart,” prompted Oxtowne.

“Come out of the cart,” said No. 5, which, being a bit of slang of the day, set the boys off again, and sent No. 5 down four removes.

Mr. Lackteacher laughed indecently loud to show his amusement at this blunder, and was seconded by Miss Biggs, who sneered evidently and offensively at her friend Sniggs, who, pretending to stand up to reach a book that was near her, stamped revengefully on Biggs’s toe, on which she knew grew a large and tender bunion. This occasioned a little interlude, which enabled No. 5 to gain his remove downwards without attracting much attention.

When quiet was again restored, and the pain of Biggs’s bunion had subsided, the examination was renewed, and as the boys were only put on in passages that they knew by heart, all might have ended well, had not Mr. Lackteacher shown a degree of vindictiveness which ought not to have existed in the breast of so patriotic a “promoter of the education of the lower classes.”

He blew his nose very loudly to attract at-

tention, and Miss Biggs helped him by a powerful ahem ! a sound between a hiccup and a cough. When all eyes were turned upon him, he politely requested one of the smallest and stupidest-looking boys in the class to go through a Greek verb.

“ What verb should you like ? ” inquired the *examinee*.

“ Oh ! take any verb you like,” suggested Mr. Innovate, very kindly, “ take $\tau\acute{\iota}\omega$.”

“ $\tau\acute{\iota}\omega$? ” said Mr. Lackteacher. “ Why $\tau\acute{\iota}\omega$? ”

“ Because, replied the boy, very innocently, “ that’s the verb as cuts out $\tau\acute{\upsilon}\pi\tau\omega$ in master’s new flib, and we say it every day.”

“ Flib ? What’s a flib ? ” inquired Dr. Tintinabulum.

“ A name we give to the new grammars, because they’ve nothing outside them,” replied the boy.

“ And not much *inside*, I should think,” said Mr. Lackteacher.

A wrangle ensued, in the midst of which the boys were dismissed, with prizes and rewards of *merit* (?), and the company bowed out—with the

exception of a committee of males, who had been invited to dine with the head-master. The dinner, being cooked by the *artiste* of the Rotherwick *cuisine*, was not despicable, and the flavour of the viands served to satiate the appetites and rage of the conflicting parties. Nothing unpleasant, therefore, occurred while the meal lasted, and Dr. Tintinabulum even condescended to say "a little wine?" to his rival Mr. Lackteacher, who filled his glass and nodded amicably but *rather* stiffly in reply.

When the cloth was removed and the old port placed on the table, the friendly feelings of Mr. Lackteacher vanished with the butler, and in their place the demon of discord raised a malevolent commotion in his breast which displayed itself thus :

After the usual "toasts" had been given, and "responded to enthusiastically," as they say at the Crown and Anchor, Dr. Tintinabulum rose from his chair, and requested permission of the chairman to give a toast. As Mr. Innovate instinctively anticipated an eulogium on himself, coupled with "the health of the head-master of

Rotherwick," he graciously acceded to the request of his friend, accompanied by a look which was intended to imply an excess of curiosity, and an intensity of doubt, as to whose convalescence and longevity the doctor could possibly be going, with the aid of a bumper, to propose and promote. Mr. Lackteacher saw the look, and, winking at one of the sub-masters who sat next to him, whispered, "Humbug!"

"Bumpers, if you please, gentlemen," said the doctor, setting the example by filling his glass,

"Until it did run over,"

either from his zeal in his friend's behalf, or from a feeling of nervousness, arising from a sense of the awful responsibility he had taken upon himself.

"Don't attempt to raise it to your lips, doctor," said Mr. Lackteacher, consolingly, "your nerves are unstrung, and the wine is too good to be wasted;" and then, turning to his neighbour, added, loud enough to be heard by the assembled party, "he must do as *other brutes* do — stoop and imbibe."

The doctor, without noticing the "aside," commenced a "brilliant assortment" of compliments on the gentleman whose health he was about to propose ; and when his allusions became so palpable that no one could any longer doubt who that enviable gentleman was, Mr. Innovate first looked greatly surprised, afterwards very much abashed, but finally, as the speaker's increasing energies supplied him with more strongly-perfumed flowers of rhetoric, exceedingly proud and gratified.

As I, Peter Priggins, am entirely "unaccustomed to public speaking" myself, and have not a copy of the doctor's speech by me, my readers must be satisfied with the *heads* thereof, which was all my friend Broome could remember of it —(Dusterly letting a pun, says that is the way to make a *capital* speech). Perhaps it's no great loss after all, and any gentleman (of Oxford, of course, I mean) who has any imagination, can easily supply the *hiati*, as a very classical mayor of our city once correctly designated the gaps in the gums of the town-clerk, where his teeth ought to have been ; "but," as he added,

“cariosity had made them all *non est inventuses*.”

I beg the doctor's pardon, who, during this digression, has been left standing on one leg, with one hand — the left — firmly clasping the back of his chair, and the other flirting with the rind of an orange; his eye, not “in fine phrensy rolling,” but resolutely fixed on a nail in the opposite wall. After ascertaining that the nail would do to hang his ideas upon *sic orsus est* —

“— deeply profound regret — toast of such magnitude and importance — abler hands (hear) — a man whose native genius — acquired attainments — honour to his country and of Rotherwick — classical honours — unsurpassed-in-brightness luminary of Oxford — focus of the eyes of all the friends of education — freeing himself from those prejudices which emasculate the minds of bigots — heroically and without-an-eye-to-his-own-ag-grandizmentally, crushing under foot the “old humdrum system,” — expansion of intellect — quick-march of mind — slow coaches — steam-travelling — cut-across-the-fields system — *my* plan — result of painful thought (hear, hear) —

smothered the Angular system — *sub*-merged other public schools in a profundity whence they never can hope to emerge — public approbation — thanks of the nation — no reward but his own conscience — ministerial patronage — a comfortable stall — the dignities of the bench — regret of his grateful country — tomb in Westminster Abbey (hear, hear !) — for the proof of all which — unhesitatingly appeal to the result of the examination of to-day — sit down — head-master of Rotherwick — due honours.”

The doctor then took his eye off the nail in the wall and sat down, after gulping his bumper convulsively, amidst suppressed cheers from all but Mr. Lackteacher, who, I regret to say, had behaved himself in a very ungentlemanly manner — considering he had been eating the toastee’s mutton — throughout the whole oration. He had carried on a running commentary of “humbug,” “twaddle,” “lay it on thick,” “that’s a bouncer,” “modest, that,” suiting the action to the word ; and when the doctor alluded to the mortal remanets of the head-master being snugly entombed in the abbey, he slapped his hand

upon the table and positively asserted it “ was *no go.*”

Mr. Innovate had not heard these flying remarks, nor one-half of the doctor’s speech ; as he had wisely abstracted his mind from all other matters, in order to get ready to “ put in his answer,” as they say, “ in chancery.” When, therefore, he saw the speaker resume his seat, he rose, as a matter of course, to return thanks, but was prevented by Mr. Lackteacher, who commenced a speech which lasted an hour and a half, in which he abused not only the Tintinabularian system, but every body who supported that system, and the inventor of it, and his *protégé* more especially. In every pause of his discourse he filled a bumper and drank it off — Dr. Tintinabulum, to be even with him, did the same, and the application of the port acted as oil on the inflamed minds of both — they were, to use a mild term, strongly “ excited,” and when Mr. Lackteacher had finished his “ few remarks” and his decanter, and, with a look of triumph, dropped into his chair, the doctor filled his remaining glass — scowled at his enemy —

drank it — rose from his seat, and, being unable to articulate from rage or “excitement,” shook his fist, pointed to his heart, went through a series of signs imitatory of loading a pistol, ramming down the ball, cocking the weapon and presenting it at his adversary’s head, and committed himself in the eyes of the respectables there assembled.

But I must do as Timanthes did of yore, draw a curtain over what I cannot satisfactorily represent. I will merely say, that the head-master did *not* make a speech, and that the doctor and Mr. Lackteacher *did*—the former to his spouse, in which he accounted for sundry sanguineous stains upon the frill of his shirt, by reminding her of his liability to a “bleeding at the nose”—the latter to his valet, in which he explained away a black eye, by vituperating “the inconvenient practice of butchers’ boys carrying trays along the *pavé*, parallel to the optics of unwary passengers,” which is certainly an objectionable *trait* in their character.

Unfortunately, the boys by some means were made acquainted with the disreputable affair,

and the slang phrases, "there you go with your eye out," and "why do you carry your nose in a sling?" were the result of the information so injudiciously conveyed to them.

But, to return to our hero. During the Easter vacation, which followed immediately on the examination, he had been especially introduced and requested to patronize a boy in the form below him. The name of this youth was Master Wastepaper Winkey. His surname, of course, he inherited from his father, "old Winkey," as he was familiarly termed; his *prænomen*, or Christian name, was given to him by his godfather, Lord Viscount Wastepaper, the powerful patron of Ninny.

I must first explain how so important a personage—in his own estimation—as Lord Wastepaper was, condescended to become the sponsor of, and allow his noble name to be bestowed upon, so humble an individual as Master Winkey.

Winkey *père* began life as a printer's devil—a species of demon too well known in these penny publications' days, to need description—and by dint of great natural talent, aided by unremitted

application, raised himself in life, until he became first of all a contributor to, then sub-editor, and lastly, editor and principal proprietor of, *The Scarifier*, a powerful and largely-circulated newspaper, which advocated the principles of Lord Wastepaper — whatever those principles were.

I was going to say, “we of the *New Monthly* never talk politics,” but that would sound too grand for an humble college scout; I merely mean that I need not say whether Whigs or Tories (I like old names) were scarified by *The Scarifier*. It is sufficient for my purpose to know, that Winkey was of Lord Wastepaper’s way of *thinking* (?) and in return for certain hebdomadal dinners, gave his patron some ten or twelve lines of column in his hebdomadal publication, and, out of gratitude and in an exuberance of delight, for his allowing him to insert “his reasons for entering his protest against” a certain measure in *The Scarifier*, volunteered to do the baptismal responsibilities for little Winkey, who was still *in petto*; which means, not introduced to the public. His gratitude

was still further evinced by procuring him an appointment in the foundation at Rotherwick, where, as he was looked upon as a *snob*, he was unnoticed by the Hon. Augustus, and every body else of any pretensions to red-book.

"Augustus," said Lord Wastepaper to Ninny, about ten minutes before dinner on Easter Monday, "you know my godson Winkey, of course? he dines here to-day."

"I know him *by sight*," replied Ninny, "but we're not cronies; he's not in my set; we don't allow counter-skippers or snobs."

This was accompanied by so magnificent a look, and an application of both his forefingers and thumbs to the elevation of a well-starched shirt-collar — then a recent and much-prized invention — that Lord Wastepaper was staggered.

"You will greatly oblige me," he resumed, after recovering from the staggers, "by not only patronizing, but making an intimate — a — a —"

"What, a *pal*, as we call it?"

"Exactly — precisely my meaning," continued his lordship, "by making a *pal* of him for the

future. I am under great obligations to his paternity. But for him many of my best things — my — my — my —— ”

“ Slap-up sayings,” suggested Ninny.

“ Exactly — precisely my meaning — would have been—been —— ”

“ Turfed—eh ?”

“ Exactly—precisely my meaning—had it not been for the columns of the *Scarifier* — indeed, I’ve been noticed in the—the—the—— ”

“ Fore-horse of the team—the *leader*.”

“ Exactly— precisely my meaning — and the whole family of the Fuddleheads would have no cause to regret doing the—the —— ”

“ Amiable,” again prompted Ninny ; his lordship’s *copia verborum* being any thing but a cornucopia, or horn of *plenty*.

“ Exactly — precisely my meaning,” replied Lord Wastepaper. “ You recollect what Flaccus says :—

‘ *Vixere fortes ante—ante—*’

some man or other ?”

“ Agamemnon was the man you allude to,”

said Ninny ; “ but, excuse me, we are rather particular about quantities at Rotherwick, and call it *vixère*.”

“ Exactly — precisely my meaning,” replied Lord Wastepaper, coughing rather confusedly, “ and, by-the-by, as you’re home for a week you’ll want a—a—a—”

“ Tip,” said Augustus, seeing his patron pull out a neat Russian-leather note-case.

“ Exactly — precisely my meaning — there’s a Henry Hase for £10. If not enough, do — ”

“ A bit of further application ?”

“ Exactly — precisely my meaning — but you *must* patronize the—the—”

“ Snob, eh ? I will,” said Ninny, pocketing the bribe.

Before and after dinner Ninny behaved barely civilly to Winkey or Compo, as he was called at school, from the fact of his father having been a compositor, and the £10 would have been thrown away, had not the boys got together cozily at the side-table, while the seniors were having their rubber, and displayed a congeniality of taste in absorbing several glasses of brandy-and-

water, which, in the fashion of "the days gone by," was placed there with a dish of sandwiches. Compo told Ninny several anecdotes connected with the press so well, that Ninny was amused, and, after the third glass, laid his arm over his shoulder, and called him "old fellow," a term of endearment that put Compo so much at his ease, that he revealed a great many of his father's secrets—in confidence, of course.

"But I say, old fellow," inquired Ninny, "how is it that your governor stands putting all the old one's twaddle into his paper, eh?"

"Oh! his lordship's one of our best customers," replied Compo. "My governor gives him five or six lines, and he takes fifty copies to circulate among his friends."

"Ah! I see; but it must be stupid work editing a paper, eh? No end of questions to answer every week, and fellows coming in to lick you for libels, eh?" said Ninny.

"The greatest fun in the world," said Compo. "I answer the questions when I'm at home, and it's easy enough. For example: if a fellow writes to know 'which lived longest, Julius

Cesar or Nebuchadnezzar?' I don't trouble to ascertain the fact, but merely say, "A. B. is an ass—the question has been answered at least twenty times already in this journal; and as to coming to *lick* us, we keep a strong porter, and are never at home. Then we've such fun in the editors' room up-stairs. Two such jolly fellows. A shilling's-worth of brandy-and-water over every article! The governor never shows till Saturday, when we go to press."

These confidential communications, and the "*repetatur haustus*," established an intimacy between the boys, which Lord Wastepaper pronounced to be "exactly—precisely his meaning," and, on their return to school, Ninny undertook to, and succeeded in developing the good qualities of his new friend so successfully, as to get him into the "best set," where his knowledge of London life—of a peculiar grade—soon obtained him the ascendancy. This caused a quarrel between him and Ninny, which ended in a fight, and, to the surprise of the whole school, who looked upon Ninny as "*Hercules ille*," Compo, from his superior science,

acquired in sundry set-to's with the sub-editor for exercise, came off victorious, and without a scratch. This, as it invariably does, at school, cemented their friendship more firmly.

Mr. Innovate was not satisfied in his own mind with the result of the grand examination, and resolved to adopt strong measures, to ensure a more satisfactory exhibition at the next public display of his railway system of education. The failure, for such his monitor—his own, not the school monitor—conscience, plainly told him it was, his modesty would not allow him to attribute to any thing “rotten in the state” of his new plan; he cogitated deeply to discover the mysterious cause, and at last was fully convinced that it was all owing to the little boys being sometimes ten minutes behind time in coming into school in the morning.

Having discovered the cause of the disease—the *prognosis*, or the *diagnosis*, as the learned *in arte medendi* call it—his next judicious step was to discover and apply a remedy for it. Flogging was not allowed, except for heinous offences, by Dr. Tintinabulum and the Tinti-

nabularians, who doubtless had strong reasons for objecting to so common, and, generally speaking, successful a mode of punishment. Impositions were still done by the fags, and therefore were no punishment to the imposed. Mr. Innovate was in despair. What was to be done? He resolved to ask all the under-masters to breakfast, to talk the matter over.

The under-masters differed in opinion mentally from their *chef*; but they did not express the difference in words, and the matter might probably have caused a great deal of difficulty, had not one of them, who was naturally designed for a sneak — he was named “ Sneaking Jerry ” by the boys — suggested the propriety of *fining* the lag-behinds.

“ An admirable notion,” said Mr. Innovate, “ but I can improve upon it—we will not only fine *them*, but every boy in the whole school, a shilling a minute for every minute that one little lag-behind does lag behind.”

This was voted too severe, and was lowered to a sum proportioned to the varying incomes *allowed* to each form weekly. To make this

clearer, I must observe, that the first class—the old *sixth* form—received, without consent being obtained from their parents, or their even being consulted on the subject of their sons' private receipts and disbursements, an allowance of three shillings and sixpence weekly; the *second* had half-a-crown; the *third* eighteenpence; and so on, until it descended to the “small charge” of sixpence, below which it was considered *infra dig.* to go. What Rotherwickian knew the value of *copper* coin?

When, then, one boy was one minute behind his time, the individuals of the first class were fined a shilling each, and all the other classes in a sum proportionate to their respective allowances. At the end of the week, therefore, instead of having to receive the wherewithal to obtain cakes and tucks, they had to pay something out of their own pockets; or, if they had not wherewith to pay, to be put down in the book as “Drs. to the dilatory fund.” This was exceedingly unpleasant, but was borne for some time without any other manifestation of disgust but grumbling.

“ Compo,” said Ninny to his friend one night, as they sat over their themes and the fire—for autumn was again befriending the coal-merchants, “ can you lend me a pound note to-morrow ?”

“ Haven’t a scuddick—not even a brown—quite cleaned out by these infernal fines,” replied Winkey, putting his fingers into his shorts, and exposing two empty pocket-linings.

“ It’s a great shame,” said Ninny, “ that we should have to pay, and heavily too, for the laziness of the fags, and not be allowed to lick them either.”

“ Yes, it is,” said Compo; “ and I should like to know where our money goes to.”

This dialogue roused the other boys, who left their exercises, and, surrounding the speakers, expressed a sudden but decided intention of knowing how their large contributions were expended, or not contributing any longer, let the consequences be what they might.

“ Who can do an addition sum when money is concerned, that is, what old Splitquill calls a compound one ?” inquired Ninny.

Compo could, for he had acquired sufficient knowledge of summing before he got his appointment to Rotherwick. This was fortunate, as none of the others could — arithmetic not being considered necessary for “the sons of decayed merchants,” as the statutes rudely designated the foundation boys.

“Take this vessel of paper then, Compo,” said Ninny, “and let us know, as near as you can, how much *tin* Innovate has appropriated to himself from gown-boys only.”

Upon inspecting the “dilatory fund,” it was found, by reckoning up, that, independent of £4. 17s. which remained on the “debtor’s side,” £30. 10s. had been paid during the last quarter, and, upon this fact being announced, loud cries of “Shame, shame ! we won’t stand it any longer,” followed, expressive of deep indignation.

On the next day at twelve o’clock, a meeting or concio of the boarders was called in the gown-boys’ hall, at which, after a full exposition of their grievances made in several admirable speeches, it was agreed to demand of Mr. Innovate an account of what he had done, or intended to do,

with their money, and, if he refused to accede to so reasonable a request, to refuse to pay any more fines, and have a grand rebellion.

There was but one serious difficulty in this arrangement, and that was, *who* should be the boy to put the question touching the *tin* to the head-master? Those who had been loudest in expressing their indignation at their grievances, and their determination not to submit to them any longer, were observed to hang back first when this inquiry was made; no one was found resolute enough to "bell the cat," until Winkey offered, if Ninny would be their leader, to second him. Loud cries of "Ninny for ever; he's a plucky one;" and other such flattering remarks, induced our hero to give his consent to this arrangement, the announcement of which was followed by loud huzzahs.

It was settled, that as soon as they were all in school in the afternoon, and Mr. Innovate had taken his seat, Ninny should give a signal by sneezing loudly, to ensure which he had provided himself with a pinch of pepper, and then the signal was to be repeated by Compo, and all the boys were

to "rise simultaneously," and cry out, "no fines."

As the clock struck two, every boy was in his place, and Mr. Innovate flattered himself that the success of his plan for insuring punctuality was no longer doubtful, for there was not one lag-behind to justify a fine. He looked round triumphantly, and, smiling complacently, took his seat. Ninny instantly applied the pepper, and uttered a series of tremendous sneezes. Compo did the same, and the boys rose *en masse*, shouting, "No fines, no fines," which they continued to do until Mr. Innovate rose from his chair, pallid with alarm, wonder, and excitement. The cries then gradually ceased, and were followed by a dead silence.

Sneaking Jerry was the only under-master present, and, being naturally timid, and seeing there was likely to be a row, he pretended that he had left his pocket-handkerchief behind him, and ran out of school to the different boarding-houses to apprise the other masters of what was going on.

Mr. Innovate looked round the school with an

eye before which the majority quailed, and demanded, in a stentorian voice, "the meaning of the indecent cries that had just polluted the pure atmosphere of Rotherwick school?" This question was especially intended for the captain's benefit; but as Mr. Innovate's eye, when he was excited, had a slight cast in it, Ninny, whose place was nearly at the bottom of the first class, really thought it had been put to him, and answered it by saying, in a firm but respectful manner, "We wish to be informed, sir, what you have done with all the fine money?"

"Any thing else?" inquired Mr. Innovate, curling his lip into a polite sneer.

"Merely that if you do not satisfy us on that head, we do not mean to pay any more fines," said Ninny.

The boys, encouraged by Ninny's coolness, and, at a signal from Compo, renewed their cries of "No fines! no fines!" until Ninny shouted out "Silence! What's the use of making a row? Let us behave like gentlemen."

This appeal was successful, as the Rotherwickians valued themselves at a high rate on the

score of their gentility, and Mr. Innovate, gaining courage from the reappearance of sneaking Jerry, with a tail of the four under-masters, addressed Ninny individually, thus :

“ We thank you, sirrah, for quieting the school, and beg to tell you [a low bow] that we do *not* mean to render an account of the moneys.”

“ Then,” said Ninny, “ I beg to tell you, sir, that I do *not* mean to pay any more fines.”

“ Nor I—nor I—nor I,” cried five hundred little voices, in all the notes of the gamut.

“ Silence,” cried Ninny.

“ Nincompoop,” said Mr. Innovate, after blowing his nose violently, and looking lachrymose, “ sorry are we to blight the fair prospects of any boy, but, unless you submit to pay the fines we think it expedient to impose, we *must* expel you from the school.”

“ I certainly shall not pay the fines,” said Ninny.

“ Nor I,” called out Compo, as per agreement.

“ Then you are both expelled,” said Mr. Innovate, blowing his nose again, more fiercely than before.

"I shall appeal to the governors," replied Ninny, taking up his books, and leaving the school-room with his friend Compo.

This was a signal for a general attack on the windows, which were speedily demolished with slates and other missiles, and a rush out of the schoolroom into the green, where the bump of "destructiveness," so prominent in schoolboys, was further developed, in spite of the exertions of the under-masters to prevent it, by an assault on every window in the place, much to the benefit of the glazier who "contracted to keep all the glass in Rotherwick in repair." Benches, tables, book-cases, desks, and every thing breakable, were broken to pieces, but no violence was offered to any of the masters, because, as Ninny said, "Such conduct would be cowardly, ungentlemanly, and unbecoming so respectable a set as the Rotherwickians."

Mr. Innovate stood, like the gentleman at Carthage, "weeping o'er the ruins" of Rotherwick, and solacing himself by now and then expelling any boy whom he saw making extra exertions to complete the destruction of his

much-loved domain. Sixteen were thus punished, and left Rotherwick with Ninny and Compo for London, where they had a champagne dinner at the Bedford, went to the play, had a hot supper with lots of punch, and went to bed with the assistance of all the waiters in the establishment.

On the following morning, shocking bad headaches, and the dread of their governor's displeasure, cast a gloom over the broiled kidneys and curaçoa at breakfast; and they separated with their courage considerably diminished, but firmly resolved not to submit to a surrender. Twelve, however, of the number were forced, by their judicious parents and guardians, to return, and were readmitted upon consenting to be severely flogged, *in medio scholæ*. Forty-five more underwent the same unpleasant operation for being parties to sending a long account of the rebellion to a morning paper, and quiet was restored in Rotherwick.

Lord Wastepaper called a meeting of the governors, at which Mr. Innovate was strongly objurgated for inflicting fines upon the boys

without their knowledge and consent, and ordered to readmit Mr. Nincompoop upon his submitting to be flogged. This he refused to do, declaring he would never sit in the same room with him again; and Ninny not choosing, as he said, "to expose his person to the admiring gaze of 500 puerilities at his time of life," and not wishing to deprive Rotherwick of the services of so zealous, if not discreet a master, declined the kind offer of the governors.

Compo's father also refused to allow his son to return, and "took the shine out of Rotherwick," as he expressed it, by inserting a long and exaggerated statement of the transaction in the *Scarifier*, in which he libelled all the masters, and for which he had to pay £50 damages, according to the verdict of a discriminating jury of his peers, and to submit to the pleasing and witty remarks of the counsel engaged by the plaintiffs, who took care to bring to light in the course of their examination a full account of his humble birth, parentage, and education.

The fines, by order of the governors, were reduced to one penny, and Ninny returned home to Wales, where he was cherished as a “martyr to scholastic despotism,” by his admiring governor and governess, at the suggestion of Lady Skinnykin, who still honoured Lady Fuddlehead by residing with her.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE Honourable Augustus Noodledoodle Nincompoop had fortunately put his name down on the books of Christ Church before the untoward event of his expulsion from Rotherwick happened.

The Dean—

“ Priggins ! ” said Broome to me when I had read to him thus far from my manuscript, “ for *my* sake be cautious how you speak of our dean, indeed of every don connected with ‘ our *house* ’ (*ex ede Christi*— it’s astonishing how vehement some Christ Church men are in insisting on this distinction !) We are acknowledged to be the top sawyers of the University, and are consequently jealous of, and indignant at, any thing that may tend to take the froth off our beer.”

“ Haye ! the ead you mean,” said Dusterly,

seizing the fresh quart that Mr. Rakestraw, the corpulent landlord of the Shirt-and-Shotbag, had just introduced ; and performing the operation alluded to metaphorically and characteristically by Broome, begged “ we would hobserve the hastonishing halteration for the worser, has was made in the andsome happearence of the jug has olded the licker.”

Broome smiled benevolently on our mutual friend, and, adopting Lord Wastepaper’s favourite expression, observed it was “ precisely his meaning,” and showed his high estimation of appearances, by finishing the jug, and ordering a fresh one with a “ good *head* to it.”

I ventured to ask him how it was possible I could deteriorate from the dignity of the dean and dons, to whom in relating his tale I should be compelled to allude, when they were all dead and gone?

“ Haye ! rotten and forgotten,” said Dusterly.

“ Dusterly !” said Broome, looking disgusted, “ how can *you*—a bedmaker of the University—predicate oblivion of any of its members ?”

Dusterly looked evidently bewildered and incapable of understanding Broome's interrogatory, but winked at me as he knocked the ashes from his pipe illustratively of his assertion.

"Dead or not, Peter," continued Broome, "you may rely upon it you will be accused of drawing the portrait of some of our dons, or some of their particular friends."

"In that case," replied I, "I must rest my defence upon the '*qui capit*' plea, and make up my mind to submit to the consequences—they won't 'call out' a scout."

"*We* are not fighting-men," said Broome, "but, as I am the acknowledged supplier of Mr. Nincompoop's college-career, the indignation you may excite will be vented upon me, and I shall lose many little seasonable presents—"

"Christmas-boxes, you means," said Dusterly.

"That I have hitherto been in the habit of receiving at all *seasons* of the year," continued Broome, terminating his sentence with a louder voice and a reproachful look at Dusterly.

I promised to be very careful in my allusions to the dead, and really could not quarrel with Broome for giving me the caution he did ; as I have often experienced the truth of his remarks that, “ I should be accused of drawing the portrait of some man, or of some one of his particular friends,” though I always “ draw it mild.” Even our Bursar, who is by nature raised above those little prejudices that corrode the minds of inferior men, called me up to him the other day, and tried to bribe me with an order for half-a-dozen of port out of the proctor’s bin, to tell him who Dr. Puffs, Dr. Doonuffin, and some other of my *dramatis personæ*, really were.

I was certainly surprised and a little offended at his attempt to interfere with an author’s “ privileges,” and, I suppose, I expressed my feelings by my looks, for he added, “ that it was not to gratify his own curiosity that he made so unconscionable a request, but that of a lady, an intimate of his, with whom he sometimes played a pool of quadrille ; and who, having known every don that had lived in the University for the last eighty years, was ex-

ceedingly annoyed that she could not point out the originals of some of my caricatures.

I declined most respectfully to enlighten the lady, and our bursar calling me “a wag,” with one of his peculiar winks, gave me an order for *two* bottles of every-day port, instead of half-a-dozen of “the proctor.” Thus is virtue rewarded.

This same identical lady a day or two afterwards sent Mrs. P. what she, Mrs. P., calls gallically a “*jolly petty she-hen*,” and called upon her to “pump” her; but “Mother Priggins,” as the undergraduates of St. Peter’s allow, “ain’t going to be pumped for every *puppy* that may happen to be presented to her.”

I beg pardon of the public for this little digression. Mr. Nincompoop, as I was observing when friend Broome interrupted me, was fortunately entered at Christ Church, though he had not been matriculated; and the dean of that era was a very dear friend of Lord Wastepaper, and not on very amicable terms with Mr. Innovate, to whom he bore sundry grudges for having “cut him out,” in doing sundry themes and

exercises, which he was fully persuaded would have procured him (the dean) the distinguished honour of reading them "in hall," and gaining an infinity of *κυδοι*.

When, therefore, Lord Wastepaper wrote him an account of his having *withdrawn* his *protégé* from Rotherwick, owing to the mercenary conduct of the head-master, the dean, without the slightest hesitation, expressed his "full approbation of his spirited and judicious mode of proceeding under the atrocious circumstances," and his resolution to admit Augustus as soon as any rooms were vacant for his reception — that is, rooms in "Canterbury," as no honourable could be supposed to put up with any habitation elsewhere. He also strongly recommended Lord Wastepaper to look out for a private tutor for his young friend, and have him "crammed" for entering. Nor did his kindness end there; for he ventured to give the address of a gentleman who had been a member of his "house," of whose birth and parentage little was known, except that his mother was a sempstress in Oxford, and that his nose was very much like — somebody's.

Lord Wastepaper acted on the hint, and wrote to Mr. Workemhard at his vicarage of Fire-cum-Fume, in the county of Stafford, which, after being rejected on account of its very low figure in the “*liber Ecclesiasticus*” by all the students, had descended to him as senior servitor.

Mr. Workemhard did not venture to refuse Lord Wastepaper’s cub, and £400 per annum, as it was backed by the “*dean’s particular*” recommendation; nor was his joy at such a pleasing addition to his moderate income lessened by the fact of old Winkey’s begging him to take young Winkey, or Compo, as we have hitherto called him, on the same terms.

The young men went down together to Fire-cum-Fume, which derived its name, doubtless, from being pleasantly situated in the immediate neighbourhood of several coal-mines, which, not being contented with supplying all England with warmth, made the country too hot to hold them by keeping constant fires of their own all the year round. Their flames being “*superficial*,” like the modern systems of education, served to “enlighten the country” for many miles.

I shall merely say of Mr. Workemhard, that, considering the up-hill work he had, he *coached* his team remarkably well, and gave them a deeper insight into the profundities of "As in presenti," and "Propria quæ maribus," than they had had a chance of gaining at Rotherwick.

Old Winkey presuming upon the intimacy of Lord Wastepaper with the dean, had not the least doubt about getting his son into Christ Church, and suggested an early application, for the purpose of getting his rooms ready at the same time with Ninny's.

It may be as well to give copies of the correspondence between the viscount and his friend, before I give the results of it.

I must observe that his lordship did not *quite like* the idea of his *protégé's* being hunted through life by the son of a newspaper editor; and, though his deep sense of the obligations under which he lay to the columns of *The Scarifier* induced him to accede to the proprietor's wishes that he would write to the dean, he did so in a way that would lead that functionary to oblige

him by giving him a polite refusal, as may be seen from his letter.

“ My dear Dean,

“ Amongst several of the scholars who were withdrawn from Rotherwick school at the same time as my honourable young friend Nincompoop, was a lad who bears the name of Winkey, with whom Augustus has done a bit of familiarity — rather, I think, unbecoming his rank — but boys of seventeen are not the best judges of the dignity of rank and station—instead of which, his father rather reckons upon getting him into Christ Church, on the score of some trifling attentions bestowed upon him by me.

“ Old Winkey is no fool! He is editor of a paper, or, now I should rather say, proprietor, as he has ‘ cut his pen ’—I don’t mean wounded his quill—but declined the drudgery of writing, except by deputy; I believe I *may* have sent you a copy of his weekly publication *The Scarrifier*, in which, I must allow, more justice is done to speakers in parliament than in any other paper. I can say so, at least as far as *I* am concerned.

“ In last Sunday’s paper — I think I sent you a copy—you could not have failed to notice that some attention was drawn to my few remarks on ‘ the wholesomeness and moral effects of treacle-posset, as contradistinguished from the fatal practice of imbibing brewers’ beer ;’ but I merely mention it to show you the benefits of being on ‘ good set terms’ with the proprietor of so respectable a paper ; and I have no doubt if you could enter young Winkey at Christ Church, your ‘ house’ would be benefited by it. Oxford is attacked in many prints, instead of which, old Winkey would patronize you ; and yet, I don’t see why, between ourselves, young Winkey should be allowed to be put upon the same terms — that is, footing — with an honourable. You can act as you like in the matter — I know you are generally full, and a refusal will not disoblige

“ Your sincere friend,

“ WASTEPAPER.

“ P. S. By-the-by, don’t answer *unfavourably* before *Friday*, as my remarks on ‘ the superiority of hog-skins for saddles ’ will be in print, and

too late to be cut out on Saturday. The dailies did not deign to notice them."

The dean, fully comprehending his friend's wishes, though not very logically or fairly expressed, wrote on Friday evening a letter which his lordship said "was not precisely his meaning," but which had the desired effect; *le voici.*

"My dear Lord,

"The *Scarifier*, or rather *two Scarifiers*, we receive every week. The one directed to myself, I do not scruple to say I read and enjoy very much, and am happy to see that justice is done to your lordship's remarks—*speeches* I ought to say — but your modest way of alluding to your observations in the house, induced me unthinkingly to use your own scarcely correct expression. The other copy, which you kindly send to the common-room, is also read in secret with great avidity by all the members, though in public they speak disparagingly of it, on account of its excessive *piquancy*, acknowledging at the

same time that it is the best written and wittiest paper of the day. I regret that my list of applicants for admission to our house is so numerous as to preclude my acceding to your lordship's special request that I would put down the name of Mr. Winkey, jun., on my list. He could not come into residence under five years, we are so *very* full. Your lordship can read this passage of my letter to the highly-respectable father of the young man, and assure him of my sincere sorrow at not being able to admit a gentleman who would, I feel assured, do honour to our house. Will that do, my lord, or shall I come it stronger? By-the-by, the Bishop of —— is going fast, sinking rapidly; may I beg of your lordship to keep an eye on the announcement of his decease? His loss will be severely felt, and his successor will be a lucky man. I need say no more to a person of your lordship's penetration; and, by-the-by again, the rectory of Snipebog in the fens is vacant, and in the gift of the L—d Ch——r. The stipend is under £500, and, with Lord Fuddlehead's borough interest, you might procure it for his

son's private tutor, poor Workemhard, who is a heavy charge on me, and with whose tender lungs the smoky atmosphere of Fire-cum-Fume disagrees exceedingly. If I can do any thing more to extinguish the Winkeys let me know.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ Your Lordship's very obedient
humble servant,

“ PERTINAX PLOTTER.

“ Deanery, Christ Church.

“ P. S. By-the-by, once more, and with due submission to your lordship, but the B— of L—— is also shaky. ‘ Two strings to your bow ’—but your lordship will keep an *eye* on that *see* also.”

His lordship invited Winkey, *père*, to dine, and after a very *recherché* serve-up of *plats pour deux*, and the third glass of *château margót*, read to him the passage from the dean's letter, which put an extinguisher upon the candle of his son's hopes of being a member of Christ Church.

Winkey, senior, was too sharp not to see through the tactics of his lordship, but too wise

to let his lordship see that he did so. He expressed his regret at his son's having no chance of becoming a member of Christ Church, and asked his lordship's advice how he had better act under the circumstances.

Now nothing could gratify Lord Wastepaper more than having his advice asked, because it was so little appreciated as not to be very often in demand. He therefore fell back in his chair, and, putting on a very grave, considering face, as he sipped his claret, blushingly confessed that "It was one of the few subjects on which he was not *au fait*. He had been at Christ Church himself, and really did not know the name of any other college; but he should strongly advise consulting the university calendar; or, better still, his friend Winkey's going down to Oxford and judging for himself, after making due inquiries of one of the guides."

"Guides?" inquired Winkey, thinking of "Guides to Knowledge," "the college tutors I presume your lordship means?"

"By no means," replied Lord Wastepaper, "I mean a kind — that is, a sort — of men — in

shabby-genteel coats and gaiters, who wait about the Angel and Star inns, and really for four or five shillings give you an immensity of information on Oxford matters. You can't do better, rely upon it than—than—”

“Hire one of these walking encyclopædias of university knowledge,” said Winkey.

“Exactly—precisely my meaning,” replied his lordship. “Money well expended, rely on it. Go down by the light Oxford, take up your abode at the Star. The landlady, Mrs. Fascinate, is an old ally of mine. I'll give you a letter to her, and she'll do for you, depend upon it. Might I trouble you to touch the bell? We'll try one bottle of Lafitte.”

“I beg pardon,” said Winkey, rising to ring, “but would not a note to the Dean of Christ Church, or some academical, be more satisfactory?”

“By no means. You will find they will all say they are *full*, and will not venture to recommend another college.”

Winkey finished the Lafitte, took his coffee, his *chasse*, his patron's advice, and letter of intro-

duction, and his place in the light Oxford. The following evening he was welcomed by Mrs. Fascinate, the smiling landlady of the Star; and, upon presenting his note, was ushered by two waiters into No. 1 Drawing-room, *front*, and shewn by three very pretty chambermaids into his sleeping apartment, No. 2, *front*.

In these degenerate days, when coaches — I mean stage-coaches—are allowed to rattle up to the Star, and guards with swollen chops are permitted to announce their arrival and departure by playing out of tune on a keyed bugle, the rooms No. 1 and No. 2, *front*, would not have been a treat; but in former days Mrs. Fascinate would no more have sanctioned a hired vehicle, excepting a yellow and four, within a hundred yards of her door, than she would have hired a waiter with red hands, or a barmaid who could not boast of blood patrician in her veins. Nos. 1 and 2 were, therefore, exceedingly comfortable; and Mr. Winkey enjoyed his dinner and wine very much, in No. 1., and was ushered by the three pretty chambermaids, bearing two wax-lights and one warmingpan, into No. 2, where he

fell asleep, amidst the sounds of undergraduate revelry and the thrumming of

“The harp that once”

was played nocturnally within the now-forsaken walls of the Star Hotel.

On the following morning as he sat at breakfast, the head-waiter, at the request of the “gen’leman in No. 1,” procured and introduced a specimen of that now nearly extinguished genius, an Oxford guide. The specimen was dressed, as all of his species were wont to be of yore, in a tutor’s left-off coat and waistcoat, purchased of one of us scouts, and in drab knees and drab gaiters (*si hyems esset vel foret* — but without the continuations if the weather was warm) an unstarched and cable-like white tie, and a hat, which, in these times of four-and-sixpenny ventilators, would be pronounced a shocking bad one.

“The guide, sir,” said the waiter, bowing.

“Come in,” said Winkey. “Will you take a —”

“Little beer, if you please, sir. Never drinks no coffee, tea, or spirituous liquors.”

"A seat I was going to say," said Winkey.

"Never takes nuffin of the sort, sir, much obliged to you all the same. If you'd ha' stood as long as I have, and walked about all day, showing of people the lions of the 'varsity, as our young gentlemen calls the curiosities, your *calves* would not be 'staggering bobs.'"

Mr. Winkey did not exactly understand this *standing* joke of the guide, but rung the bell for a glass of ale for his new acquaintance; an order that the head-waiter, knowing his customer, executed by bringing in a large quart-cup of Squire Broadbrim's best, which, in those days, was exceedingly bad.

"I have sent for you to point out to me," said Mr. Winkey, "the best—"

"Way of seeing every thing in a day," said the guide (who was called "Old Explicator" by the men) setting down his emptied cup with a loud ah' ah! "always begins at the schools—centrical like—*meado tissimis tibus*, as we say in these classical regions—Bodleian—lots of books—Elgin marbles—five orders of archy-tecter, one above t'other—Saxon at bottom, or Doric, no

matter which—High-on-ick—composite and tip-top — upper-sawyer-like — Corinthian — pictergallery — cat looking every way at once — Lord Pembroke's statty — Charles First's warrant — and no end of hinteresting hobjects — only a shilling ! into schools, responsions only on now — young uns in a funk—across to the Radcliffe — pay a shilling — set your name down in the book — out upon the roof — fine view of Oxford — to the north Wadham College—Clarendon— theatre — not a playhouse — Ashmole's museum — Trinity and Baliol, with a distant peep at St. John's and St. Giles's church. South : Brazenose — St. Mary's, All Saints—Tom Tower—Merton and Broadwalk, with Bagley-wood in the distance. East : All-souls, notorious for its two lanterned towers, and the non-residence of its fellows — Queens — Maudlin — University, and Joe Pullen on the hill. West : Carfax church — Castle Tower — William the Conqueror — hang criminals—above in the distance—romantic woods of Wytham—Lord Abingdon—Lord-leef-tenant of the county—city prison and Worcester College—only you can't tell which is which."

The rapidity with which this compendium of information was uttered, fortunately for Mr. Winkey, exhausted old Explicator's lungs of all their air, and, ere he could inspire a fresh supply, he found time to assure him that he had mistaken his object in sending for him, and that he had not come down to the university merely to see the sights.

"Oh! ah! I twig," said the guide, winking at old Winkey. "Commercial? — want to be put up to a thing or two? Well, I'll do it—know every man as won't pay if he could, and every other man as can't pay if he would; but you must stand tick—no go without—four years at least; but no matter, you stick it on—lay it on thick accordingly — what's your line — eh? Cigars? travel for Hudson, Fribbug, and Trare, Pontay, or come the double with Minerigoes? No? In the toggery way, perhaps—Stultz—Story — or some first-rater, I suppose — good trade — native artists no go! Wrong again? Well, let me see — wine and lickures — eh? Champagne, claret, no-yoh, and mariskeeny? Carbonel — Justerini — eh? But you won't do

much—undergrads too bad judges to appreciate your articles—satisfied with gooseberry-pop and sour Bordo—dons too good judges to give you your price.”

“ My good friend, you’re entirely mistaken,” said Winkey, looking indignant at being taken for a tradesman, “ altogether wrong.”

“ Well ! well ! *manum est rare*, as we say in the schools—very seldom I am though. Twig now, I think—musical boxes and French prints—eh ? thought there was a furrin cut about your nob—very profitable, but dangerous per-fession. Recollect a German gentleman in your line—clever man—put in prison though—all through a silly Freshman, as showed the pictures to his private coach—a gentleman in the tea-and-tract way—belonging to society for re-freshing of vice—vice-chancellor had him up—tried before my lord judge at the assizes—jury and counsel examined the pictures a very long time, and pronounced them undecent—twelve months on the treadmill—no joke—eh ? Capital condition when he came out. *I* can put you up to the dodge, but you must stand a

good commission—30 per cent. on the musicals, and 50 on —”

“Fellow,” exclaimed Mr. Winkey, “your impudence can only be attributed to your ignorance—I’m not in trade! I came down here to consult you, by the advice of my very intimate friend Lord Wastepaper, about —”

“Wastepaper?” continued Explicator, not looking a bit more deferential at his employer’s suggestion of his intimacy with the noble lord. “Wastepaper? knew him well—tuft at Christ Church—steered the Torpid, and d—d badly too—thick with Mrs. Fascinate—eh?—got his seals when he was bosky one night—prompted a friend to represent him, and run away with an heiress—ward in chancery—got the girl, and *quodded* for five years in the Fleet. Lordship quite well, I hope?”

“Really all this is very unpardonable,” said Winkey, walking up and down No. 1, front, and pulling up his *gills*, as shirt-collars were then called, — “absolutely unbearable! — the brute talks of a lord as if he was nobody.”

The short time occupied by this soliloquy

was employed by old Explicator in wiping his perspiring forehead with a cotton rinocatharizor, which he extracted from the crown of his “shocking bad hat.” When the operation was over, without paying the slightest attention to Mr. Winkey’s remarks, or making the least difference in his manner and deportment, he continued, by saying interrogatively,

“ You knew Lord Limpet, of course? every body knew *him*—capital chap—had many a lark in his rooms—dab at sparring—floored him, though, many a time—what can stand against beer? Excellent cricketer—best batter on Bul-lingdon—but a regular ass for all that—got plucked for his smalls—conjugated *do—do, das, davi*—went by the name of Davy ever afterwards. You didn’t know the Honourable Mr. Muffintoppe, I dare say? Regular reading-man—never out of college, and yet the most absent man in it. Lord! how you would have laughed at him—such queer things as he did—always made a pint of blowing his nose in his doyley—drinking the water out of his finger-glass, and rinsing his hands in the port wine!

Got expelled for giving an unfortunate girl a lift in his buggy—great shame—did it all out of good nature, and mistaking her for a rail lady; and then there was Lord —”

“ Silence, sirrah !” cried Winkey, in a very loud voice, and a very great rage, “ I did not send for you to tell me a parcel of tittle-tattle about the aristocracy, but to furnish me with information on certain points. Listen to me, sirrah ! but before we begin you had better—”

“ Take one more jug of beer—wet t’other eye, we call it—never walk straight without. I’ll ring the bell—don’t trouble—William Waiter ! jug of beer for gen’elman in No. 1, front—don’t know Mrs. Rakestraw of the Shirt and Shot-bag, I dare say ? Capital landlady—never answers an order without a short arm and a long one.”

“ A what ?” inquired Winkey, looking bewildered.

“ A short arm and a long one,” replied Explicator : “ keeps the jug in the short arm, until she’s got the money in the long one. Don’t tick, I mean, and a capital plan it is in this uni-

versity. Your good health, sir, and a pleasant walk to us."

While the guide was "absorbing the malt," Mr. Winkey hastily explained to him, that he had sent for him to ascertain at which of the colleges or halls he could get his son admitted, so as to come into residence as early as possible.

"Halls, sir? never *enter* at a hall — keep them for *lishit mugrary*, or *bene dussessit*; but how does he enter? *arm. fil.*, *gen. fil.*, *cler. fil.*, or what? *gent. com.*, *soc. com.*, commoner, or how? And how much stumpy do you mean to stand? Can't advise without knowing about these things."

Mr. Winkey explained that his intention was to enter his son as a commoner, but that he had not yet made up his mind as to what allowance it was necessary to make him, as he had not been at college himself, and was, consequently, ignorant of the sum required.

"Not been at college? I knew it at once," said the guide; "wonderful the difference it makes—can't help being a spoon, unless you are regularly educated."

“And what sum should you consider enough?” asked Mr. Winkey, really for information, and disregarding the compliment that had been paid him. “I mean for a man to live like a gentleman at a respectable college.”

“Why, as to living like a gentleman—that’s all nothing — people’s notions differs so much about the way of doing it; and, as to a *respectable* college, that’s all nothing, too, as far as expense goes — there’s very little difference in the charges, though there is a good deal in the comforts — commons or jints, it comes to much the same. Very wrong notions is got abroad respecting of college expenses — a hundred a year would kiver ’em all, and leave an overplus for wine and toggery.”

“A hundred pound per annum!” exclaimed Mr. Winkey, amazed; “how do you account then for the complaints that are made of the enormous expenses incurred by young men at the University?”

“You must ask Mr. Spavins, the hackman,” replied the guide, “Mr. Pastyface, the confectioner, Mr. Loftyprice, of the Reindeer, and a

few other sich. The system's bad, and the University gets all the blame, when they can't help it. They'd gladly alter it if they could, and so would all the respectable tradesmen, but they can't. Then, you see, there's a set of chaps as sets up on the 'cutting system' — pretends to undersell the respectables—gets the young gents names on their books — ticks for three years on acceptances, promising never to negotiate them — then hands them over to a London lawyer — bills renewed — interest and discount charged—afraid to tell the governor — renewed again and again — threats of arrest — money borrowed at an enormous rate of interest — floored at last — governor obliged to stump up, and cripple himself and family perhaps for ever. I merely give my own opinion ; but I recommend every man to go to a first-rate Oxford tradesman for every thing, and have his bills in every term, even if he can't pay them ; he'll be treated civilly, charged fairly, and never be harassed and annoyed. Then I think the dons are wrong—but it's only my own opinion — in not allowing the men to have dinners and suppers in their own

rooms from the college-kitchen — it drives them to the Reindeer and other inns, or the confectioner's, who cannot supply them half so cheaply. Then I'd never allow any man to hunt, unless his paternity gave his written consent. As to the bills being sent in to the tutors — the plan, I'm told, has been tried at Cambridge, and turned out a miserable failure. All I mean is, don't blame the 'varsity, that's all — your very good health, sir."

"Well, I shall recommend my son to follow your advice," said Mr. Winkey. "I mean to give him a good allowance; but, if he runs in debt, I'll never pay his bills."

"He'll be sure to run in debt, and you'll be sure to pay his bills—at last," said old Explicator.

"I won't—I'm determined," said Winkey.

"So hundreds have said before you, but they all does it at last, just as natterrally as if they'd never said they wouldn't, leastwise, if their pockets isn't as empty as my cup is."

The guide probably meant this as a hint to his employer for another replenish; it was not taken, however; and Mr. Winkey, after confirm-

ing with an oath his intention of not paying his son's bills, took up an Oxford calendar, which was lying on the table for the convenience of visitors—lions and lionesses as the nondums call them — and proceeded to interrogate old Explicator on the subject which had caused him to visit Oxford.

“Now, sir, what college do you recommend?”

“Christ Church, in course,” said the guide, in a tone that implied there could be no doubt about the matter.

“I have already applied there,” said Winkey, looking magnificent again, “through my very intimate friend Lord Wastepaper. The dean, unfortunately, could not accede to my friend his lordship's request, because the college is so full.”

“That's only acos you ain't a regular swell—if you'd been a court-card, a trump, that is, a sort of nob like—they'd have found a *lokis inkwo* for your colt, and entered him for the matriculation-stakes the very next term as is.”

Mr. Winkey did not exactly relish this explanation of his informant's notion of the reason

why he had failed in getting his son into Christ Church ; but proceeded to read over the list of the colleges as arranged in the calendar, to each of which the guide made some objection or other ; but I will only give two or three examples as a specimen of the validity of the rest.

“ St. Bartholomew ? ” inquired Mr. Winkey.

“ Four lectures a day, and a sermon in chapel every Sunday — expected to go to St. Mary’s twice besides, and head down the sermons—he’ll never stand that,” replied Explicator.

“ St. Luke’s, then ? ”

“ Staircases all too steep — get drunk and break his neck.”

“ St. Thomas’s ? what say you to that ? ”

“ Don’t brew their own beer, and got a cook as abbreviates the commons, and lengthens the battels miraculously.”

“ St. Jude’s ? snug little college, eh ? ”

“ Wusser nor ever — too snobbish — besides dining at half-past four, and pricking their gums with iron prongs. One gen’elman as entered through a mistake, brought in half a dozen silver

forks, and was rusticated for breaking through the "customs of the college."

"St. Matthew's stands rather high, does it not?"

"Respectable — very respectable — but dangerous. The principal has got a garden, and the men make a point of 'doing it up' for him every term! they take up all the plants and trees, and set 'em in again with their roots upwards. As the freshmen are always set to do the transplanting, and the principal is devoted to vegetables, some of 'em are safe to get a *lishet mugrary* to some hall as hasn't got no outlet."

Mr. Winkey began to despair: he doubted whether the long list before him would supply him with an unobjectionable college for his son, until he came to St. Peter's, which old Expliator pronounced to be the *nipplisultry* of colleges.

"Brew their own beer—got a capital cook for an Oxford cook—knock in every night — outside the town, and handy for tandems — dogs and guns, and fishing-rods — river just handy —

battels moderate — society good — gentlemanly set of tutors, who keep the men up to their work without bullying them, and scouts as close as fresh eyesters. Bursar an excellent friend of mine—very fond of fish, 'specially lampreys and Severn salmon—as I'm Worcestershire—supply him with great pleasure, and — make a devilish good thing of him."

As it was immaterial to Mr. Winkey whether the lampreys and Severn salmon were sold to the Bursar as dear bargains or not, he did not stop to ask the price obtained for them; but finding that he, the Bursar of St. Peter's, was a gentlemanly man, and his guide sufficiently acquainted with him to procure him an introduction, and give him an opportunity of explaining his views with regard to his son, he resolved to walk down to our college, and call upon my friend.

The moment old Explicator got upon the *pavé*, he resumed the air and twang peculiar to his profession, and entertained his employer, who would fain have been "on other thoughts intent," with the usual and hackneyed phrases of a lionizer, until they arrived at St. Peter's.

They found the Bursar in his rooms, and Mr. Winkey was regularly introduced by his guide, who retired outside the oak, not to leave them to a private conference, but to run off to the buttery, to try if our tap was at all deteriorated. Having tried a pint out of each of the two best and strongest barrels, he confessed to the butler that it was as good as ever, and returned to his post—the door-post—just in time to meet his employer, who had made arrangements with the Bursar for the immediate matriculation of his son, and his coming up into residence after Easter.

“Good morning, Mr. Winkey,” said the Bursar, bowing his visitor out; “oblige me by taking one turn round our gardens, while I speak a few words on important business with Mr. Explicator. I’ll not detain him long.”

“By all means,” said Winkey, and walked seventeen times round a fifteen-feet square grassplot, dignified by the title of the college gardens, before his guide rejoined him.

“Explicator, come in,” said the Bursar, “and shut the door. Gentlemanly man, Mr. Winkey, eh?”

“Not so very rummy a one, considering he’s never been at the ’varsity,” said the guide.

“Certainly, certainly,” said the Bursar, in a hurried and careless tone; and then putting on a look of intense interest, he continued, “How are all your friends in Worcestershire? Quite well, I hope? Have you heard from them lately?”

“Not very,” replied Explicator.

“I—I—I am very much interested in their welfare, I assure you,” resumed the Bursar, pulling out a halferown; “take that, and buy two pounds of the best Oxford sausages, and send them down to them. They will be a treat, and you can just intimate that your wife is not very well, and that the physicians strongly recommend lampreys for her complaint. You understand, eh?”

“Wide awake,” said the guide, nodding and winking familiarly.

“Then there’s an order for a quart of the best beer. Now hurry after your employer, and let me *see* the parcel from Worcestershire the moment it arrives,” said the Bursar, shutting

his oak, and feasting in imagination upon the expected dainties for at least half an hour.

Mr. Winkey followed his guide (who of course had his two quarts in the buttery, at the Bursar's expence, not thinking it at all necessary to inform him that he had, as he called it, "chalked him up a quart" before he got his "order") back to the Star; and after having liberally discharged him, and paid his hotel bill, which was not so very enormous, considering he had Nos. 1 and 2, front, made his bow to Mrs. Fascinate, and returned to London by a "middle-day Brummagem."

Mr. Winkey, when apparently otherwise engaged, always had an eye and ear open to the interests of the *Scarifier*. On the Sunday, therefore, after his return from Oxford, the reading public were gratified by seeing, in his "notice to correspondents,"

"A. B., Oxford, is informed, that it was not L—d D—y, but that eminent statesman, L—d W—r, who got bosky at the St—r, and forwarded the views of a relative of the *Fascinating* landlady of that excellent hotel upon a

certain heiress, for running away with whom he got a commission aboard his majesty's *fleet*."

This he knew would gratify his patron's vanity; but it may be doubted whether the publication of Lord Limpet's failure in the schools, and the cause of it, and Lord Muffintoppe's rustication, for merely mistaking an "unfortunate" for a proper lady, was as agreeable to their lordships or their friends. He had serious thoughts of hiring old Explicator as a regular reporter of university matters; but, upon due consideration, resolved to defer it until his son had taken his degree, lest the publishing of the little anecdotes he might obtain should give offence to the authorities, and interfere with the youth's advancement, by ensuring a pluck for his smalls.

Winkey, junior, or Compo, as we shall still continue to call him, on the receipt of his governor's letter, conveying the result of his visit to Oxford, ensured the box-seat of "the Black Prince," which then ran from Birmingham, through Oxford to London, in order to get to St. Peter's by the time fixed upon by the Bursar

for his matriculation. Ninny did not accompany his friend, though he very much wished to do so. Lord Wastepaper, however, strictly forbade it, as *infra dig.*, and his *protégé* was obliged to submit. His curiosity was so great with regard to the manners and customs of the university, that he begged Compo to write him an account of his proceedings as soon as he thought he could give him a little insight into life in Oxford. This elicited the following letter, in a shaky scrawl:—

“ Mitre Inn, Oxford.

“ My dear Ninny,

“ I am afraid you will hardly be able to decipher my hieroglyphics—my hand shakes awfully, and my head feels as if it contained all the blood in my body. It goes thump—thump—thump, as if my brains meditated a dissolution of partnership. All this is easily explained. I supped at St. Mark’s last night with our old crony at Rotherwick, Tom Velox. You must recollect him; he was the fellow that used to distinguish one of his uncles, who had lost an optic, as the ‘one that had a lamp out, and

wore a verandah.' We had lots of broiled bones, grilled chickens and mushrooms; cold, stewed, and scalloped oysters, and I don't know what besides for eatables; and as for drinkables, there was what was called champagne and sherry at supper, with some capital strong beer—court ale they call it. After supper we had egg-flip, punch, cardinal, and bishop, about a gallon to each of us, I should think, judging from the size of the jugs. No end of singing—at least making a noise with their voices—for they don't seem particular here about words or tune. I believe, for I have but a very obscure recollection of what passed, that I was ass enough to make several speeches, and sing four or five of our old songs, for which I obtained an excess of *κνδος*. How the party ended, or how I got back to my inn, I cannot conceive; but as my back and the inside of my knees are much bruised, and very sore, I have a strong suspicion that I must have been doubled up, and wheeled home in a barrow.

“ When I woke this morning I had serious thoughts of offering my services to any gentle-

man who might have a pond to be drained, or a well to be emptied; I am sure I could have done it for him speedily and thoroughly. I never knew what real thirst was before. I rung my bell, intending to order a dozen of soda water, to be opened at once into a bucket; but Dennis, the waiter, who has great experience in such matters, would not hear of it. He ordered me to 'lay' down, and in five minutes entered with a quart of St. Mark's strong beer, into which he had put a toast and some grated ginger. The very sight of it was enough, and for some time I could not muster resolution to obey his injunction, 'to toss it off to the last drop, and eat the toast.' I did at last, however, and fell asleep for a couple of hours, and woke again, feeling much better, but very shaky and full about my nob. I've just been to look at the landlord's greyhounds, of which he has an excellent breed. He wears the queerest tile you ever saw—about two inches high in the crown, with six inches of brim at least. The men call it his 'Mitre.' He is a kind-hearted, worthy man, sticks up for the university, and is

very much respected by its members, to whom he is ready to give a helping hand at all times, even in discussing three or four bottles of port, and washing them down with five or six glasses of brandy and water. Recommend 'the Mitre' to all your friends. The charges are moderate, wines excellent, and the house is free from bugs and humbugs.

" But I must begin at the beginning, as the French say. When I left you at Fire-cum-Fume, I thought I had plenty of time to get to Birmingham; but the parson's buggy-horse has a pace of his own, and out of it he would not go in spite of Jacob's pig-whip, which he applied more vigorously than is his wont—urged by the promise of an extra halfcrown. I tried a pin, but it was not a bit more serviceable. I was determined not to be beaten by the brute, so I cut a large piece of furze, when we got to Foxfull gorse, and clapped it under his tail. The experiment proved that his hide was not so insensible in all parts as I imagined, for he immediately displayed his tenderness by kicking Jacob out of the trap; and if I had not run to

his head, and lifted up one of his fore-legs, and held it until Jacob had extracted the *causa tanti mali*, the chances are that Mr. Workemhard's equipage would never have cost him any more for taxes. We certainly went at a livelier pace afterwards; but Jacob would sit with his legs outside, dangling over the wheel, being in fear of another kicking bout—for the horse raised his rump very suspiciously every time the lash tickled it.

“ We got to the Hen and Chickens just as ‘The Black Prince’ was ready to start. Mr. Lillywhite, the waggoner, had the reins in his hand, going to mount the box, when I made my appearance. As he is a ‘privileged person,’ and always speaks his mind, he addressed me thus—after telling the porter to put my luggage into the hind boot.

“ ‘Going up to Oxford, I s’pose?’

“ I nodded affirmatively.

“ ‘To be mutilated?’

“ ‘Matriculated, you mean.’

“ ‘Certainly—by all means, if you prefer it. Now let me give you a nint—if you don’t keep

better time at chapel and lecture, when you reside in college, you'll get double-thonged to make up for lost ground, I can tell you. Now, jump up—here, Billy, put up the ladder for the gen'elman, he's only a Freshman.'

"As soon as we were clear of the pitching, and I thought he could hear my remarks, I begun a conversation by criticising his team. This he bore in perfect silence, until I said,

" 'Pretty little animal that left-hand front-horse.'

"To which he replied with a stare, 'That what?'

" 'That left-hand front-horse — the gray there, with an abbreviated tail.'

" 'Whew! ew! ew! ew!' whistled Mr. Lilly-white, and looking very grave, said, 'I tell you how it is, young man—I never druv a more ignorant chap in my life. You'd better get off at the fust stage up, take a yellor, and go back to your crammer — for I'm blowed if they'll have you at Oxford. Now mind what I say—that gray oss is called the near leader, and what you calls a 'brivated tail' is a short dock. Never call it by no other name again.'

“ ‘ Why do you call it a *near* leader when it’s the farthest horse from you ? ’ I ventured to ask, after a quarter of an hour of feeling ashamed of my ignorance.

“ ‘ Why, you knows nuffin ! You see those two osses are called the near osses, becos they runs next the near side of the road, and these two osses is called the off osses, becos they run on the side as the driver gets off of.’

“ I did not venture any more remarks until we got to the place where we were to change horses, when I asked him if he would take a glass of ale.

“ ‘ Much obliged to you, sir — never drink malt liquor, it’s the most sleep-bringing-oningest thing as is—I always haves sixpenn’orth of cold without at every stage, and if any gen’elman likes to make a shilling’s-worth of it all the way up, I never objects.’

“ I paid for his brandy and water, and had a glass of very excellent Staffordshire ale myself, and we got on much better afterwards, though I limited my inquiries to the localities ; such as, ‘ Whose house is that ? ’ and ‘ What village is

this?' But after two or three stoppages, with corresponding colds without, and glasses of ale, which gradually got worse as we drew nearer Oxfordshire, I began to question him upon Oxford matters, and, amongst other things, asked him what necessities he should advise me to bring up with me when I came into residence.

"We were then dragging Long Compton Hill, and I did not get any answer until we got to the bottom, and he pulled up for the skid to be taken off, when he told me 'never to interfere with a man when he was driving down a steep hill, full inside and out, with a heavy load on the top, becos the politest of 'em could not stand it, 'specially when the roads was slippery, and no hold for the skid.'

"When we were on the level ground, I begged to 'move the previous question,' touching the necessities.

"'Why you see I'm always ready to put a young man in the right way, and I'll just give you the result of my 'quaintance with Oxford life. You *must* have two pair of muffles.'

"'Muffles! what are they?'

“ ‘Boxing-gloves, to be sure — but you know well enough ; I saw you squaring at the oss-keeper last stage, and as you came from Rotherwick you know all about that, so don’t go for to gammon me. Well then, two pair of files with masks and gloves to match. If you’re a real cricketer, and mean to join the Bullingdon, of course you’ll bring your own bat. You shoot, of course ? becos if you do and haven’t a double, my friend Sykes is your man — ticks for ever, and never duns. Then for fishing, I suppose you’ve got all right — if not, Loder and Gunner will put you in place — *they* tick too — never recommend a gen’elman to a man as doesn’t. Any thing in the dog line, Tom Sharps or Webb can supply—only ’member, they don’t tick for dogs—becos they ain’t recoverable in the vice-chancellor’s court. But if you want an out-and-out pinter or setter, just give *me* a nint, I always look out for master, and many a good one I’ve picked out for him. You see I rub my boots with a little ile of aniseed, and somehow the dogs follow me, and then, poor things, after they’ve run alongside the coach a few miles, they

get leg-weary ; so, out of compassion to the poor dumb animals, I take 'em up and give 'em a lift in the fore-boot. Then if you are in the fancy line at all, I've got a few bulls and half-breds at walk, at Early-bottom, and elsewhere, and can give you the office when a fight is going to come off—but do you ever back a pigeon? I've got *such* a breed of carriers ; and as for fantails, I won't turn my back on any man ; all sixteen feathers in their tails, neither more nor less—but don't take my word for it — just get beyond Maudlin turnpike-gate, and tell Spooner, who works this coach to Maidenhead, that you are going to see my fantails at Early-bottom, and he'll frank you any day, only you must stand brandy and water at every public — he pulls up regularly, but loses no time, as he slacks his hand over the levels. Then you'll want a few rats, and a badger now and then — you can't do better than go to Webb ; he's always a handsome assortment of lively ones. For pigeon-shooting, Boyce is the best man — fee him well and he'll pinch your birds without any body seeing him, and make your match safe. You hunt of course ?'

"I was afraid to say I had never tried it, so nodded, and he continued,

" ' Well, if I was you, I wouldn't bring my own osses up—there'll always be a screw loose. Go to my friend Isaac, or Kickum, they'll use you well and never dun you ; but make a bargain beforehand, as that keeps all on the square, and saves jostling when you come to a settlement.'

" But I must leave off now and write again to-morrow, as I am just going to lunch with one of our men. I could not eat any breakfast, but feel rather peckish now, and fancy that I can make play at a couple of wild ducks and a dish of snipes. After lunch we are going to lark to Woodstock, to view the gloveresses. So adieu till next post.

" Your's truly,

" C. WINKEY."

CHAPTER XIV.

“YOU'RE what hi calls ha rummy sort hof ha horthor, Mr. Priggins,” observed Dusterly, in a tone between reproach and contempt. “You sets hout ha pretending to give hus a history hof the Honourable Mr. Nincompoop, of Christ Church ; hand then goes hand hoccipies hall one chapter with hold Winkey and is young un's proceedings. Hi calls that 'ere ha gross him-position hon ha discernin public.”

“At the commencement of my autobiography—”

“Your *what* ?” inquired Dusterly.

“My autobiography,” I replied.

“His that hany thing good to heat ?” said my friend, sneering and looking round to Broome to applaud his wit.

"At the commencement of my 'Life and Times,' then, I continued, "I professed to be erratic on certain occasions ; but in this instance it was absolutely necessary for the working up of my story ; besides, in writing of a man's friend, you are writing of himself, as Cicero observes in his *De Amicitia*."

"D— Cicero, and d— is hamasishy too," said Dusterly, giving the table a hearty thump, to insure, as he expressed it, "hemphasis to is hobervation."

"Gently, gently," said Broome.

"Hi shan't," said Dusterly, "for you nor no one. Asn't 'e been and showed hup my huncle Enery?"

"Your uncle Henry? I assure you—"

"Yes, my huncle Enery," said Dusterly, thrusting his head into my face, and showing his teeth as a cat does in the act of yawning, "hunder the name hof hold Hindicator, the Hoxford Guide. There 'e his to the life — breeches, gaiters, and shocking-bad at ; can't mistake im. Not that hi care a rap about *im*, honly a man don't like to ave is relatives showed hup without

is leave, and a hoffer of standing somethin and-som."

I assured my friend that I had not the least idea of making his respectable uncle sit for the portrait I had drawn, and was proceeding to prove my words by pointing out to him some glaring discrepancies between the original and the picture, when Broome kindly whispered me that I should vainly attempt to convince him that his uncle Henry was not an injured man, and had better apply a salve to his wounded feelings in the shape of a glass of "warm with." I took Broome's hint, and told my angry friend I was extremely sorry that I had unintentionally hurt his feelings, and would treat him to any thing he pleased.

"Peter," he replied, shaking me by the hand, "hi eartily forgive you, hand hif you'd honly a inted has much hafore'and, you might ave showed up my haunt Hemily, hand hall the rest of my respectable family. Mr. Rakestraw! a glass of twist, and chork hit hup to Priggins."

Having thus healed my friend's wounded honour, and restored his equanimity, and "all

for the small charge" of sevenpence, I will return to my tale, and give the remainder of Mr. Winkey's letter.

"Mitre Inn, Oxford.

"My dear Ninny,

"I am rather seedy again this morning, as we did a bit of excess at Woodstock yesterday, and I got split in riding home; but Dennis has supplied me with his *panacea* for all ailments — a quart of St. Mark's court ale, with a toast and ginger in it, and I am just able to give you an account of my entering the university, and being matriculated before the vice-chancellor.

"Of course, my first effort when I arrived at 'mine inn,' and was ushered into the coffee-room by Dennis, was to order dinner, which quickly made its appearance; for, although I fancied I was extremely hungry when I sat down, and was afraid of being mistaken for the immortal Dando, I found that I could not do justice to the excellent fare provided for me. I felt nervous and fidgety, and there was a dryness about my palate and tongue that rendered the liquids more desirable than the solids. I tried to convince my-

self of the absurdity of yielding to these feelings, by reminding myself that I was no longer a schoolboy, but a man, and in a very few hours about to be an university man ; but in vain ; for opposite to me stood Dennis and the underwaiter, with their napkins under their arms, watching, as I fancied, every mouthful I took, to see how a freshman masticated. On one side of me sat three young men over a bottle of port, whom I should have guessed to be collegians from the style of their dress and conversation, without the collateral evidence of their caps and gowns, which were carelessly thrown on an adjoining table.

“ Their talk was principally of boating, ‘ going down’ with Stephen Davis, training on underdone beefsteaks and London porter, with discussions on the merits of the ‘ strokes’ of the different boats. Though these remarks did not much amuse me — for they were talking in *hieroglyphics* to me, they did not annoy me. My presence would, probably, have passed unnoticed, had it not been for the following little dialogue between Dennis and myself, when I entered the coffee-room.

“ ‘Dinner, sir, I presume?’

“ ‘If you please, sir.’

“ ‘Soup and fish, of course?’

“ ‘If you please, sir.’

“ ‘Piece of biled beef, carrots and potatoes?’

“ ‘If you please, sir.’

“ ‘*Friggazeed* rabbits and Oxford sasages?’

“ ‘If you please, sir.’

“ ‘Plum-pudding and roobub-tart?’

“ ‘If you please, sir.’

“ ‘Pint of sherry and pint of porter?’

“ ‘If you please, sir.’

“ ‘Coming directly, sir,’ concluded Dennis, going out of the room, and, as I fancied, giving a look of peculiar meaning to the men who were sitting at my side. I may be doing Dennis an injustice by this supposition, but something evidently drew their attention towards me, and elicited the following remarks, *sotto voce*.

“ ‘Regular case of viridity, eh?’ said the first.

“ ‘Regular. Just escaped from pedagogy,’ said the second, who might have left school himself about six months.

“ ‘Scarcely fit to be trusted out without the governor,’ said the third, ‘but a neat figure and strong about the shoulders—make a pretty bow-oar, eh?’

“ ‘Could not pull ten strokes without being winded, though, if he eats such a dinner every day as he has just ordered,’ observed the first.

“ ‘Rather a queer-built coat,’ said the second.

“ ‘Decidedly queer,’ said the third, ‘and rascally bad boots.’

“ ‘Under these circumstances, Ninny, you can readily understand the feelings with which I sat down to dinner. I took wine with myself every two minutes, and a little London porter between each glass, to give me courage to proceed, and relieve the aridity of my palate, but it would not do; I felt as if I was smothered. I was fortunately relieved in a few minutes, or the consequences might have proved fatal.

“ ‘Who is going to chapel?’ said one of my tormentors.

“ ‘Why, we all cut this morning,’ said another.

“ ‘Dennis, listen if our chapel-bell is ringing.’

“ ‘It’s been ringing these ten minnits,’ said Dennis.

“ ‘Then let us mizzle,’ said all.

“ ‘Who is going to pay?’ inquired the youngest-looking.

“ ‘Oh, never mind paying; I’ve got a tick here. Put it down to me, Dennis; and I say, old fellow, I’ll owe you half-a-crown—I’ve got no tin.’

“ ‘Generally the case; but I’ll book it,’ said Dennis, opening the coffee-room door for the young men, who threw their gowns over their arms, and put their caps on their heads all on one side. I noticed, too, that all the boards were broken, and the tassels torn out by the roots.

“ After making a very miserable meal, Dennis intimated the necessity of a pint of prime port, to which, of course, I did not feel courage enough to object, though I had had quite sufficient stimulus from my pint of sherry and my London porter. When the port was introduced, I ventured to ask Dennis a few questions as to the proper and usual mode of proceeding in college matters.

“ ‘Waiter,’ said I, after giving utterance to a

cough preliminary, 'I am come up to be matriculated.'

" 'Swear to that,' said Dennis.

" 'How do you mean, waiter?'

" 'My name ain't waiter, sir; it's Dennis.'

" 'Well then, Dennis, how do you mean that you can swear to it?' I inquired.

" 'Practice, sir, all practice. Most men as enters comes up with their governor. Know 'em by that, and no mistake. When they come up by themselves, it's just as easy. They always say sir, to the waiter, and let him order their dinner and wine.'

" 'Exactly,' said I; 'in my own case, for instance, I—'

" '—Ordered dinner enough for six,' said Dennis, smiling, 'and wine enough for two—that is two *freshmen*, and felt choky-like all the time you were eating and drinking. Always the case at first; soon goes off, though. Now, when a man comes up to *reside*, how do you think I know him?'

" 'By ordering half the quantity, I suppose,' said I, 'and relishing his dinner.'

“ ‘ Nothing of the kind, sir. When the coach or the poshay stops, he calls out Porter! take my luggage to my rooms. What name and college? says the porter. Then he gives a description of himself, in a loud voice, thinking to astonish the crowd as always collects round our gateway when a vehicle drives up; and to show ’em he’s got some money in his pocket, he gives the coachman or shayboy twice as much as is usual, and pays the porter a shilling beforehand for carrying his luggage. Where are you going to enter, sir?’

“ ‘ At St. Peter’s,’ I replied : ‘ must I go and call on the master or any body?’

“ ‘ There again,’ said Dennis ; ‘ that shows your freshness. The head of St. Peter’s ain’t a *master*, he’s a *principal* — that’s one of the first things as you’ll have to learn ; but as for calling on him or any body else, this evening, you’ll excuse me—but—eyes rather glazy—tongue a little faltering—pint of sherry, pint of porter, and now the port—rather too much *now*, but you’ll come to it soon.’

“ ‘ You are quite right,’ said I, ‘ Dennis, I

do not feel exactly in a condition to call and do the dutiful to an authority ; and as to the port, would it be asking you too much — just to — just to — drink it *for* me.’

“ ‘ With the greatest pleasure, sir — any thing to oblige a gentleman,’ said Dennis, pouring the port into a soda-water glass, and, as he expressed it, ‘ depositing it within the lining of his waistcoat.’

“ ‘ Not bad tackle that, sir ; master never keeps two sorts, for fear he should be asked to jine a gentleman in a bottle of the worser.’

“ At Dennis’s suggestion I contrived a scrawl to the Bursar of St. Peter’s, and received in answer a polite note requesting me to breakfast with him and the Dean on the following morning, at half-past eight o’clock. I then showed my wisdom by taking my tea and *betaking* myself to my perch for the night.

“ In the morning I presented myself at the college-gates at the time appointed, and, by the directions of Cerberus, knocked at the door of No. 2, one pair of stairs on the right. ‘ Come in,’ brought me into the presence of the Bursar

and Dean, who received me very kindly, and by their quiet gentlemanly manner relieved me of the embarrassment I felt at making my *début* on the stage of college life.

“ It will not amuse you, Ninny, to give you an account of our conversation over the twanky and brown Georges, as it chiefly related to college and university matters, and the probabilities of Mr. Such-a-one getting his double first, and Mr. So-and-So being a dead pluck.

“ After breakfast, the Bursar wished us good morning, and I proceeded with the Dean to his rooms, where I underwent a slight examination in Virgil and Homer, and the Greek testament, through which I managed to scramble *more modoque Rothervicensi*.

“ This ‘ unpleasant little affair’ being over to our mutual satisfaction, the Dean’s scout was summoned to procure me a cap and gown, and show me the rooms that would be unoccupied after the Easter vacation, that I might select any set I chose ; these things being done in college on the principle of ‘ first come first served.’

“ As I find I am to be under the especial protection of this scout—my rooms (if two closets under a sloping roof deserve that name) being up one of his staircases—I must favour you with a description of his personalities and peculiarities.

“ He delights in the name of Joseph Gump-tion, as appears by the parish register, but is known in college only by the title of Joey Gumps, with an alias of Old Joey; not because he is an old man, but because he has a little dirty boy, his son, who, under the same name, is in training to succeed his father in the mysteries of bed-making and *pillaging—omnibus hoc vitium lecti-factoribus*.

“ Old Joey in his personals is short and rather obese, with an unmeaning set of features, cold grey eyes, and a nose of the Bardolph species, strongly indicative of his attachment to John Barleycorn, and resembling in its hues a turkey’s head and wattle, as they appear on a cold frosty morning. In dress he adheres rigidly to the custom and costume of his predecessors, and appears in drab shorts and worsted stock-

ings, a cast-off black coat of the Dean's, and an unstarched white tie. What sort of hat he wears no one knows, as he has never been seen with such an article within the college walls, and he is never seen elsewhere, his leisure time being spent in the buttery and kitchen.

“ I will just narrate to you a little dialogue that passed between us, to give you an insight into the man's character and manner. His principal peculiarities are an astonishing rapidity in uttering his words, and a firm conviction that he and his master, Mr. Neeldowne, the Dean, know more than any body in Oxford, and *par consequence* in the world.

“ ‘ These rooms,’ I observed, on being shown into my garrets, ‘ are very small, are they not?’

“ ‘ Call these small? Well, I like that. Mr. Neeldowne says they ain't, and so *I* say; and so they ain't small,’ replied Joey.

“ ‘ They will want furnishing, at any rate.’

“ ‘ Shouldn't wonder—don't *you* bother about that—leave it all to *me*—*I* knows all about it—me and Mr. Neeldowne settles them ere things.’

“ ‘ I shall want crockery, eh? tea-chest and

those sort of things, when I come up? Whom do you recommend, Joey, to supply such articles?’

“ ‘ Shouldn’t wonder,’ replied Joey ; ‘ but don’t *you* bother about that—leave it all to *me*—*I* knows all about it — me and Mr. Neeldowne settles them ere things.’

“ ‘ To all my remarks and questions he gave the same reply, with this little variation : when I begged him to name a tailor, of whom I might order a new cap and gown.

“ ‘ *New* cap and gown? don’t be an ass—leave it all to *me* — sell you a second-hand set, good as new—*I* know all about it—there it is—five and twenty shillings—money down—thirty-five, tick till next term—me and Mr. Neeldowne settles them ere things.’

“ As Joey was uttering this, he extracted from a sort of coal-closet a rusty-looking bit of bombazine with no sleeves, but two strings looking like a child’s leading-strings hanging from the shoulders, which he assured me was a commoner’s gown in a good state of preservation, and a cap which had certainly done duty for several sets of masters.

“ ‘ Put ’em on—fit to a T—knew they would—leave it all to *me*—*I* knows all about it—me and Mr. Neeldowne settles them ere things—now for the Vice-chancellor’s.’

“ So saying, and without waiting to listen to my expostulations about putting on another man’s, or rather set of men’s greasy, dirty cap, he hurried me down the stairs at the risk of my neck up to the Dean’s rooms, ushering me in, and placing my hat on the table with,

“ ‘ There’s a fit—quite as good as new—only five minutes to ten—Vice-chancellor won’t wait.’

“ ‘ Very well, Joey,’ said the Dean, ‘ we will go immediately—and Joey, I’ve some friends to dinner to-day at ——’

“ ‘ Very well—don’t *you* bother about that—leave it all to *me* — *I* knows all about it — me and Coqrins settles them ere things,’ replied Joey, as he fairly turned his master out of his own rooms and shut his oak forcibly.

“ ‘ Quite a character that, seemingly,’ I remarked to the Dean, who was smiling at the astonishment depicted in my face from observing the coolness of both master and scout.

“ ‘ Quite a character,’ he replied ; ‘ we have spoilt him almost ; but you will find him a civil and obliging servant, if you let him have his own way—which, by-the-bye, he *will* have. Now I must just call in here on a friend of mine, and will join you at the Vice-Chancellor’s in five minutes—you don’t know your way, but if you follow that man you can’t do wrong ; he is going to be matriculated too.’

“ When the Dean had left me, I looked up St. Peter’s Street, in which I could only see two human beings ; one a boy, about fifteen years of age, in a round jacket and nankeens ; and the other, a short stubby man in a shooting-coat, wheeling a barrow with a basket in it resembling those which at Fire-cum-Fume they call butter-flats. It certainly struck me as odd that such a character as the man before me should be going to be matriculated, and with a wheelbarrow too ; but he was the only *man* in the street, so I thought I could not be wrong ; besides, I had heard from Dennis that tradespeople might if they pleased be matriculated, to enable them to trade in the University, instead of ‘ taking up their freedom’

in the city. I, therefore, followed the barrow-man up St. Peter's Street, into a fine wide street, called St. Giles's, with a row of trees on each side of it, like the *boulevards* in Paris. Here he was joined by a younger man in a shooting-dress, with eight or nine shotbelts round his shoulders and waist, and as many guns, doubles and singles, under his arms. They went on at a steady pace, and I followed about twenty yards in their rear for some distance ; indeed so far that I began to blame the Vice-Chancellor for living so far from his work. At the end of the street a direction-post informed me that two roads which branched off there led, one of them, the left, to Woodstock and Birmingham ; and the other, the right, to Banbury, Bicester, and Brackley. The barrow-man took the latter, and, after pursuing it for about a hundred yards, turned short to the right down some ploughed land until he came to a grass meadow, into which he wheeled his barrow, and then, taking out a sort of square box, measured a hundred yards to the middle of the field, and pegged the box firmly to the ground.

“ I was all this while leaning over the gate, watching his proceedings, and wondering what part, in the ceremony of matriculation, this box was to take. The cad with the guns called out ‘ Won’t you come in, sir? We don’t charge nothing for looking on.’

“ I walked up to him and asked him if the University gentlemen would be there soon, and if the Vice-Chancellor was coming.

“ ‘ Art arter ten precise—for the sweepstakes ; and art arter eleven for the grand match. But I never know’d the Vice-Chancellor to attend,’ said cad, depositing the guns against the barrow, and throwing the shotbelts on the basket, which caused a rustling as of winged birds, and a loud and continued *took-a-rooing* sort of noise.

“ ‘ Are you going to enter?’ I inquired.

“ ‘ Enter?’ said cad ; ‘ I’ve heerd talk of entering osses for a race and long-tails for a course, but we calls it trapping of ’em. I’m obliged to trap ’em now, ’cause father’s got too fat to stoop.’

“ Cad senior then came up with a long line in his hand tied to the box, and, touching his hat,

said, 'Come to put your name down, sir, I suppose?'

" 'Yes,' said I, 'certainly; but do *you* take down the gentlemen's names when they come to enter?'

" 'Allays does it myself, and then there's no mistakes; besides which, Jim there ain't out of his pothooks and hangers; how shall I put it down?' said cad, taking out a dirty-looking red-covered book, with a clasp and pencil attached.

" Now the Dean had very kindly explained to me at breakfast-time the advantages and disadvantages of entering as *arm: fil:* and *gen: fil:* so I answered, '*Gen: fil:* if you please; it is quite as respectable and not so expensive as *arm: fil:* I am told.'

" 'J—e—n, jen, f—i—ll, fill,' spelt the cad, as he wrote it down; 'What college?'

" 'St. Peter's,' said I; 'what's the fee?'

" 'Two suvs each, and the losers to pay for the birds. Money down before you pulls a trigger.'

" 'Triggers! — birds!' I exclaimed, 'what do you mean?'

“ ‘ Blue-rocks every one of ’em,’ said Jim, ‘ and nice lively birds they is — all cotched last night at Wolvercot.’

“ ‘ Really,’ said I, ‘ I am quite in the dark ; I came down on purpose to enter myself — and you —’

“ ‘ Well ! and ain’t you entered yourself ? Here you are, Mr. Jenfill, of St. Peter’s, two pounds ; you’ve only got to shell out the suvs, toss up for your turn, and go in and win if you can, but the odds is ten to two on Lord Straight-eye. So, if you ain’t a good shot, you’d better hedge upon him.’

“ ‘ But,’ said I, ‘ I did not come here to shoot ; I came to be matriculated before the Vice-Chancellor.’

“ ‘ Vell ! blow me particularly tight,’ said Jim, ‘ if this isn’t about the werry rummiest go as I never did see ! A gentleman coming to a pigeon match, and a mistaking of my werry respectable governor for the Vice-Chancellor ! Isn’t it a rum start, eh, governor ?’

“ ‘ The queerest touch I ever saw,’ said cad *père*, and he and his son indulged in such an

unanimous burst of laughter as made me sensible of my egregious folly, and almost tempted me to show them that though, from my cockney life, I had never seen a pigeon-match, I had been present at and profited by more than one boxing-match ; but prudence fortunately, as it was two to one against me, asserted her empire over me, and I explained to the cads, whose inharmonious ‘ laughing chorus’ was not yet ended, how the mistake had arisen.

“ ‘ I twig,’ said the senior cad ; ‘ you never conceived that the little genilman as walked up St. Peter’s Street alongside of my barrer could be called a *man* — but he’s a genilman of your own college, as comed up to get a—a—what do they call it as dead people leaves to the young uns to live cheap upon ?’

“ ‘ A scholarship ?’

“ ‘ No, that ain’t it—a long word as the wild-beast-men makes use on.’

“ ‘ Oh ! an exhibition ?’

“ ‘ Ay, that’s the ticket — as got an exhibition, and when once any little kivey becomes a ’varsity genilman, he is called a *man*, even if he’s

scarcely britched as some of 'em ain't—at Corpus for instance.'

" ' Well,' I inquired, ' what had I better do?'

" ' Have half-a-dozen pigeons and try your hand,' said Jim, ' now you are here—we've lots of birds—only 15s. a dozen, and you may use ere a vun of these guns you like.'

" I declined his offer, not wishing to expose myself more than I had done by my egregious stupidity, and turned round to make the best of my way to college, when I saw the face of Joey Gumps over the gate, explaining to fourteen or fifteen young men, who were enjoying it amazingly, the ridiculous error I had committed.

" I made a run at a gap in the hedge, and cleared it to the satisfaction of the cads *père et fils*, for they cried out together, ' Go it, my tulip, you'll come out some day.' Joey, who saw my leap, guessed that I had serious objections to facing the men who were amusing themselves at my expense, and came round to meet me.

" ' Never mind, sir,' said he, ' you ain't the first freshman as has made an ass of himself—'

“ ‘ But I shall be too late for the Vice-Chancellor,’ said I, ‘ and the Dean will think me exceedingly rude.’

“ ‘ Don’t *you* bother about that—leave that to *me*—*I* knows all about it—me and Mr. Neeldowne settles them ere things.’

“ I proceeded under Joey’s guidance to the Apodyterium, as they call the room where convocations are holden; and, after a few jocular remarks from the Dean, was matriculated, paid my fees and caution-money, and took my leave of the Dean, promising to leave Oxford immediately and read hard till next term. But I broke this promise, as you know—for I met our friend Tom of St. Mark’s, and here I am still, but I shall leave for Fire-cum-Fume in a day or two, and give you a further insight into life at Oxford.

“ Your’s ever, my dear Ninny,

“ C. WINKEY.

“ P. S. Get up your articles, old fellow, for you’ll have to subscribe to them when you enter—and our Dean says you ought to know some-

thing about them beforehand, or you are just as likely to go wrong as a man who sets up in the cab-line without knowing his way about London."

END OF VOL. II.

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